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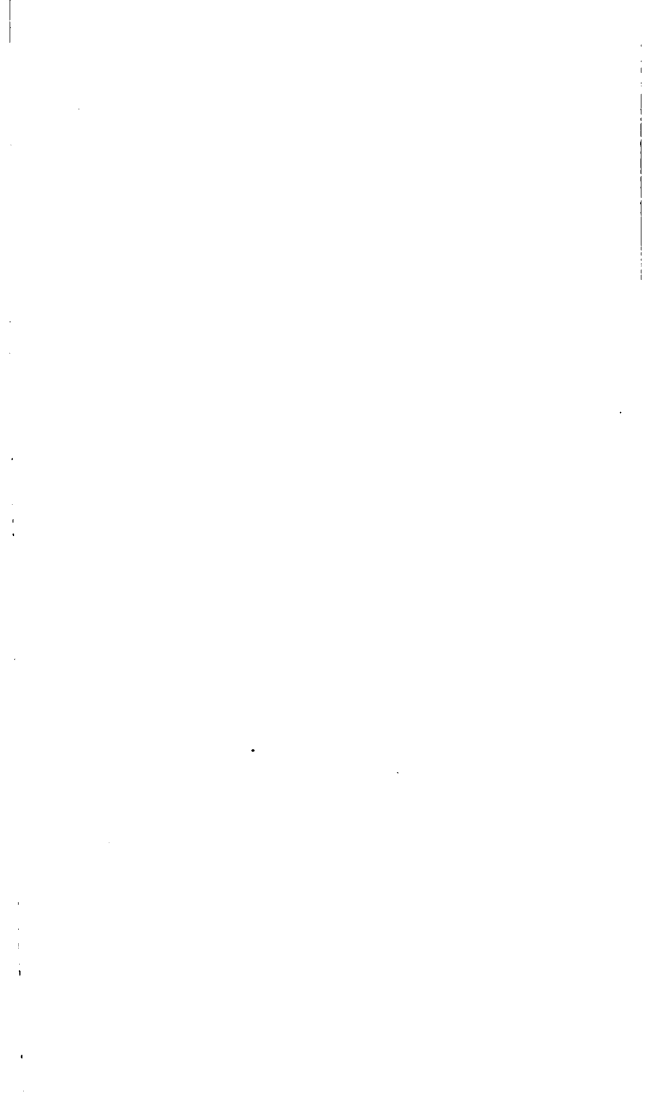


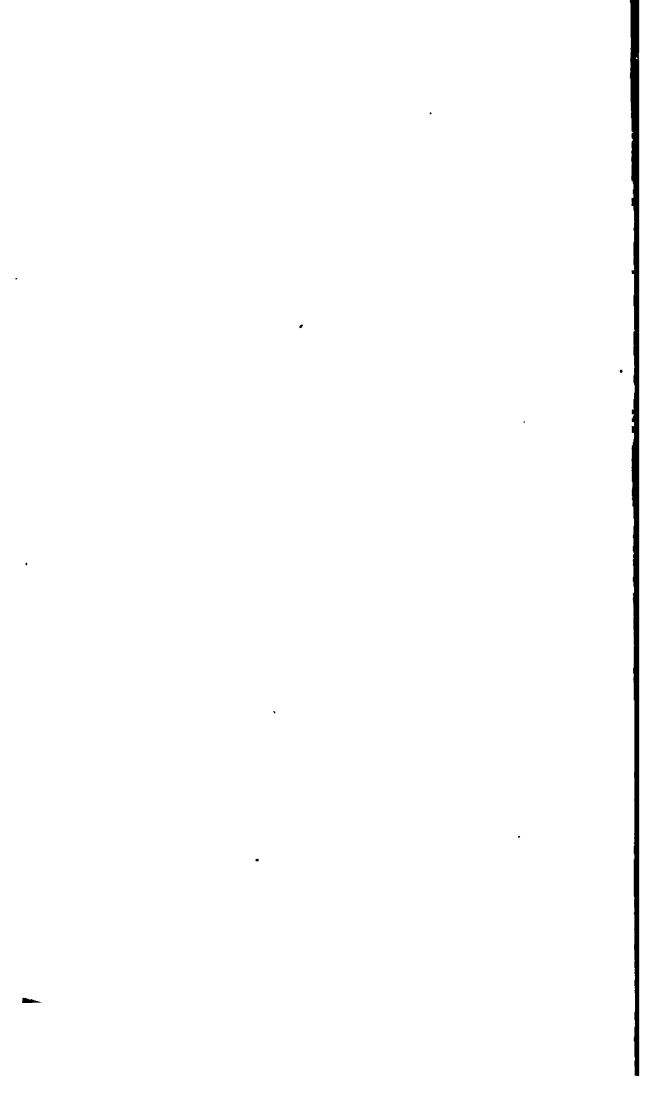
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AN ONLY SON.

A NARRATIVE

BY

THE AUTHOR OF 'MY EARLY DAYS.'

The world's infectious; few bring back at eve,
Immaculate, the manners of the morn.—YOUNG.

by
Walter Fergusson

FIRST AMERICAN EDITION.

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• AN ONLY SON.

CHAPTER I.

My natal spot was the farm-house of Thorncroft, about a mile from one of the principal towns of the county of Devon. My father's name was Richard—mine Robert—Earnshaw. To the business of a woollen draper, in E——, my father added agricultural pursuits, which he prosecuted with pleasure and success. By the time he attained mature manhood, his honest exertions had rendered him comparatively independent. He was thus enabled to obey the impulse of affection, and to offer his hand to Katherine Beecham, a maiden whom he had long loved, and whose only patrimony was her many virtues.

It was to be expected that a union uninfluenced by chance, caprice, avarice, or vulgar passion, would be productive of felicity. It was so. The mutual anticipations of the wedded pair were fully realized, and the birth of a son

imparted a livelier zest to domestic enjoyment.

For his own good purpose it hath pleased Providence to temper the cup both of joy and of sorrow to his creatures. A feeble *frame, sinking under the ailments of infancy, darkened the delight of the parents in their little boy. The cares of an anxious nurse impaired the delicate constitution of his mother. The family removed from E——, and fixed their residence at the farm-house. There my brother died, and there was I born, soon after the day of his interment.

Though not by nature sickly, I was far from robust. The diseases of childhood crowded upon me ere I had collected strength to sustain their pressure with firmness. Nothing short of a miracle, it was thought, could have borne me through. Maternal tenderness, living but for the helpless, was the instrument by which that miracle was effected.

I was only five years of age when I lost my mother. Other impressions of the period have faded; remembrance of this event remains permanently graven on my memory.

I recollect that I was carried at night from my cot, half asleep, to a chamber dimly lighted, and was placed by the side of a bed, on which a female, pale as the sheets, reclined, supported

by pillows. She kissed me often and often, and her fast-flowing tears dropt through the aperture of the night-dress on my bosom. I sobbed aloud from sympathy, and some person in attendance removed me gently from the room. To this scene succeed confused images of death and mourning—a dream of blackness—a crowd—a coffin and a hearse. The mildest of all the faces that looked upon my childhood I was destined to see no more.

Illness fell upon me shortly afterwards, and, young though I was, I attribute it to a sense of my bereavement. The breast of a child may be the seat of strong emotions. Sadness, on the cheek conscious of few summers, is not always as fugitive as an evening cloud in June. For a week or two after my mother's dissolution, I was consoled by hearing that she was gone on a distant journey, and would assuredly come back. They supposed I would very soon forget her. They were mistaken. I continued to number the days which were to elapse ere her return. At last I was told that God had taken her, and that she would never come home again. I went and hid myself in the garden, and wept bitterly—and I continued indulging in solitary grief until bodily malady deadened the poignancy of mental affliction.

Two years subsequently I found a carnelion heart she had worn, a trinket that had captivated my young fancy. I told no one of the discovery, but suspended it by the shirt ribbon around my neck: when I knelt in prayer I pressed it between my palms, and invoked an artless blessing on the memory of her whom it had once adorned.

There are few misfortunes incidental to humanity more productive of present and future ill than that which had befallen me. He alone can appreciate the value of such a protectress as mine was, who, like me, has been deprived of her while life is in its bud. She had cheerfully ministered to all my wants—had submitted to my peevish caprices without a murmur—had devoted herself to the patient task of correcting childish waywardness, without verging on unkindness. Had she lived, I would have imbibed the first lessons of rectitude from her gentle lips. She would have been to me a counsellor, a confidant, a mediator. Under her pruning hand not a thorn of inquietude would have grown up beneath our roof.—Why dwell repiningly on what cannot now be realized! It was ordained that her spirit should pass to ‘Him who gave it,’ ere the evil days came, or the years drew nigh in which earth’s weary pil-

grims declare they have 'no pleasure in them.'

It is necessary, for the purposes of this narrative, that I should delineate my father's character and my own. Circumstances have, I think, enabled me to portray both with sufficient fidelity.

The natural disposition of my surviving guardian had been greatly modified by the accidents of his condition. He was the youngest son of a respectable freeholder, that prided himself on being descended from a rigid Presbyterian, who bore arms under Cromwell, and withdrew from the Lord General in consequence of his adhesion to the Independant opinions on Toleration and Church Government. My father cleaved to the faith of his ancestor, and, with the sincerity of an implicit and far from unenlightened belief, mingled much of the austere and inflexible temper which distinguished the theological controversialists of the times of the Civil wars. He had an acute and inquiring mind, but his education had been limited to the routine of a country school, and thrown prematurely on the world to struggle for subsistence, leisure was not afforded him to supply deficiencies he felt and regretted. In the outset of life he sustained the neglect of relatives and the frowns of fortune; hence his

manner acquired a crust of coldness—I might use a stronger term—decidedly repulsive to those who did not know, or could not measure, his intrinsic worth. Though sensitive and ardent, he shrank from the display of his affections. In pecuniary matters he was governed by peculiar notions of utility and right; frequently liberal, more frequently parsimonious. His estimate of property was founded on the difficulty with which he had acquired it. Sound sense generally dictated his determinations; but he often overlooked the pliability of the instruments by which they were to be accomplished; and, in devising plans for an individual's good, he seldom made any account of possible failings or particular inclinations. Piety, integrity, frugality, and firm resolve, were his leading characteristics. The effect of these qualities was lessened by the absence of the milder virtues. This became very apparent on the decease of my mother, who had fully prized his excellence, and had labored hard to soften his asperities.

My elements were differently combined. I inherited the more prominent intellectual features of both my parents in a still higher degree than they existed in either. To steadiness of purpose, bordering on obstinacy, romantic pride,

and latent moral energy, unyielding when awakened, I added nervous timidity, almost feminine, that mastered my general conduct, and a poetical imagination, investing every thing around me with a drapery of its own. Fancy distributed light and darkness at its will, and I made no effort to dispel its illusions. Warm-hearted, and capable of the fondest filial attachment, I could not bring myself to give expression to my feelings by word or gesture. Like my father, I was ashamed to say I loved—and, like him, I expected those manifestations from the objects of my regard which I withheld from them. This may be deemed by some a fantastic outline, others may condemn a sketch of juvenile character as unworthy of serious note; the best answer to both will be this history of my past career, and its present consummation.

Long and deep was my father's sorrow for his beloved wife. Not even slander ventured to predict that he would wed again. His accustomed fortitude deserted him, and the sterner traits of his nature became more strikingly developed. A middle-aged maiden sister assumed the superintendence of his household. The difference of sex was almost their sole point of dissimilarity. The thoughts and wishes of

both were centred in me, and no exertion was spared, no precaution omitted, that might tend to render me good and great, according to their acceptance of the phrases.

The strange perversity of my situation laid me open at once to envy and to pity. I was reared like a rare exotic in a hot-house, and with kindred attentions experienced kindred privations. The economy of our little family was methodical to minuteness; the discipline by which I was regulated, singularly so. To preserve me from the chance of being contaminated at a public school, I was submitted to a course of domestic instruction, that my ideas might be properly fixed ere I came in collision with my fellows. 'Train up a child,' said my father, 'in the way he should go: and when he is old he will not depart from it.'—It is a golden maxim, but I think its meaning was strained with respect to me.

By my aunt Rebecca I was initiated in the rudiments of education. I displayed capacity, and she put it unsparingly to the proof. I had scarcely learned to read with fluency, when my memory, which was susceptible, was plied with incessant tasks. With her originated the first mistake into the system of tuition to which I was subjected. I was, as I have observed,

of a cast highly imaginative. Narrative, stirring or marvellous, possessed for me an irresistible charm. I could not withdraw myself from a book of battle, or adventure, until I had travelled it through. Legends of the supernatural were equally attractive. This craving appetite for intellectual excitement, prudently directed, might have led to the most solid and beneficial acquisitions. It might have contributed to form the historian, the geographer, or the natural philosopher. But open gratification was denied it, and the indulgence it illicitly provided was prejudicial or profitless. An old female servant secretly regaled me with fireside stories of ghosts and goblins, that made me the sport of the most ridiculous terrors; and she procured for me fairy tales, and books of a similar class, the perusal of which begot an aversion to the sobriety of truth, and especially to the studies to which I was lawfully restricted—these were a few school-books, the Scriptures, the various Catechisms of our faith, and the writings of eminent divines.

While I reverence the pious anxiety that toils to stamp religious impressions on the unwritten mind, I would bid the guardians of youth beware, lest by a well-meant, but uncal-

culating, zeal, they defeat or counteract their object. Unless, perhaps, to those sons and daughters of labor, whose only source of information is the infrequent lesson at the Sunday-school, experience tells me that the Bible should not be presented to the young eye as the symbol of drudgery. The weakness of humanity, apparent in the oldest and best, should be recognized and kindly encountered in those for whom the portals of existence have recently expanded. They should be taught to esteem an acquaintance with revelation as the first of rewards, instead of a penance for idleness, or a dull trial of recollection. It should be ever accessible—frequently in their hands to whose example they look up; but not obtruded like an arithmetical treatise, nor the retention of its precepts enforced by corporeal chastisement. Error, in this respect, has been productive of much mischief; and many have lamented that, to their dying day, they were sensible of the ill effects of a thoughtless and involuntary familiarity with the inspired volume. Still greater abstinence is required with Catechisms and religious works adapted to the grasp of matured understandings. To the unripe pupil they present but an unmeaning assemblage of alphabetic signs; and,

if it be wished that he should learn to comprehend them with pleasure in an after hour, they should be admitted to form a portion of his regular intellectual aliment only when he has gained strength to digest them. The mode in which I was instructed indisposed me subsequently to serious reading and reflection; and the temporary value of my acquirements may be surmised from the fact, that I conceived the word 'heinous,' which occurs in a question of the Shorter Catechism, to have some indefinable relation to tin !

Similar observations may be applied to attendance on the public ordinances of religion. While the guides of the rising generation are bound to point the way to the temple of prayer, they should carefully abstain from any exercise of authority that might lead those under their charge to consider it a 'house of bondage.' I have yet to deplore the injudicious conscientiousness which compelled me, in a precarious state of health, through every vicissitude of the seasons, to spend six hours of the Sabbath in the chapel of the Rev. Jeremiah Thorpe, hungry, cold, or drowsy; my thoughts 'wandering over the mountains of vanity,' unable and unwilling, to follow the exhortations and arguments of the preacher.

The system of management, under which I vainly repined, was altogether uniform. Even in matters so trifling as my amusements, I was not left to the slightest use of my discretion. I was treated precisely as if I had no will. Toys were purchased, play-ground allotted, and companions selected, contrary to my inclinations. I was obliged to receive the sons of the Rev. Jeremiah Thorpe, boys with whom I had no common bond of union, as the exclusive partners of my leisure. If I complained, I was debarred for the time from recreation of any kind. My father, persuaded that he barely performed his duty, was immovable. Denying me nothing he deemed essential to my comfort, he refused to make me a party to the choice of my own enjoyments, under the conviction that I would become conceited and self-opinionated. In his admonitions, he compared the ease and opportunities with which I was privileged, to the privations of his boyhood; and, if I betrayed the least symptom of discontent, I was reproached with ingratitude to him who labored that I might repose, and whose earthly happiness was inseparable from mine.

CHAPTER II.

At the age of nine my aunt Rebecca's visitors professed to consider me a prodigy of learning; and the good woman took infinite delight in seeing me display the treasures of knowledge I had acquired under her care. Every stranger, or casual guest, was called upon to sit in judgment on my abilities, and to hear me recite psalms, and chapters, and answers to catechetical questions. Diffidence, united to the natural love of relaxation, gave me a rooted dislike to these exhibitions. I contemplated the appearance of a new face with dismay, and resorted to many a disingenuous evasion to escape the threatened ordeal.

My father had for some time perceived the necessity of furnishing me with a more competent medium of instruction than my excellent, enthusiastic aunt. Conceiving the selection to be a matter of primary importance, he proceeded with caution. He continued to entertain the opinion that it was perilous to place one of my years at a public seminary. On the other hand, private tuition was accompanied by startling expense. True it was that I

was an only child, and how could my interest be better consulted than by a liberal outlay on my education? To so promising a lad, academic lore would be the stepping-stone to distinction. The advice of his clergyman terminated his hesitation. A tutor, recommended by the Rev. Mr Thorpe, was engaged at an annual allowance of twenty-five pounds and his board. I was transferred to his control with much formality.

An attic apartment, exclusively appropriated to the purpose, had been furnished with globes, mathematical instruments, classical authors, and other essentials to general instruction. I entered it, and glanced from the solemn physiognomy of my scholastic superior to his appalling apparatus in trepidation. A goodnatured smile, and a word of encouragement, dispelled my alarm. We opened the campaign, and, ere the lapse of a fortnight, I congratulated myself on the change in my situation.

Mr Jonas Bartholomew, my tutor, had long passed his majority, when he quitted a handicraft employment to commence a course of preparation for the ministry. He early manifested a love of information, and had cherished it amidst numberless difficulties. Having realised a little money, he devoted himself to the

acquisition of Greek and Latin, in which, and in various branches of mathematical science, his proficiency was considerable. He became an inmate of our house in his thirty-fifth year, after having terminated his second session at a Scottish university. As a teacher, he was by no means efficient. Neither his integrity, nor his learning, was in fault; but he wanted the faculty of explaining what he understood, and the art of creating respect for his authority. His morals were blameless, and his simplicity such that his pupil could have overreached him. Two of his peculiarities were to me exceedingly agreeable. One of these was a confirmed habit of falling asleep over his books; the other a lately-acquired passion for novels and romances. The first, probably, originated in his abandonment of manual for mental labor; the second owed its rise to an accidental acquaintance with the contents of a circulating library. I speedily learned to avail myself of both.

My father's love of order suggested a systematic distribution of my time. His repeated endeavors to persuade or awe me into a discontinuance of protracted morning slumbers, tolerated in the beginning on the score of debility, were entirely ineffectual. I seldom

breakfasted before ten. Writing, arithmetic, and the vernacular tongue, occupied me until one, when I walked, or otherwise amused myself, under the inspection of my tutor, until two, the hour of dinner. At three I resumed my position at the desk, labored at the classics and the more intricate tasks, and at six was released for the evening.

My afternoon employments did not prosper. The close air of the attic chamber, oppressive on retiring from the dinner table, was laden with resistless heaviness to the eyelids of Mr Jonas. After adjusting himself in his easy chair, it was his custom to examine me on short lessons prescribed the preceding day. Having gone through these, he specified others for present exercise, or directed me to recon wherein I had been imperfect. He then slowly extracted a volume of his favorite fiction from the depths of the pocket of his ample black coat, extended his legs longitudinally, adjusted his body on an inclined plane, rested his elbows on the arms of his seductive seat, and retaining the book with both hands, perched over its absorbing contents until his head, gradually courting support, sank, weighed down by sleep, and the object of his attention fell upon the floor. At these critical moments

I never failed to pick up the prostrate author. Lilly's grammar, or the Use of the Globes, was instantly superseded, and, bending breathlessly over the idle narrative, I remained riveted by its extravagant details so long as I heard the deep-drawn inspiration of my preceptor. When he exhibited signs of reviving perception, I cautiously deposited the volume at his feet, and reluctantly returned to the solid pursuits I had hastily and foolishly relinquished.

Opportunities for this clandestine entertainment generally occurred four or five times a week. Sometimes, however, the pre-eminent attractions of a particular work threatened to interfere with Mr Jonas's nap. On these occasions I adopted the expedient of repeating a lesson in the low monotonous tone familiar to village teachers, and resembling the buzz of a captive bee. Had the breeze floated the sound over the poppy-fields of Asia Minor, scarcely could its narcotic influence have been more overpoweringly apparent.

Eighteen months had expired, and my tutor, having saved the necessary funds, intimated his intention to pass a concluding session at the university, and expressed a wish to have his absence considered in the light of a vaca-

tion from his existing duties. My father, after grave deliberation, granted the request, in deference to the applicant's merits exemplified in my improvement. Had he been acquainted with the extent of that improvement, he had spared his courtesy. But he was elated with the reports of my scholarship and docility. Our apothecary, whose Latinity was little more than a dim dream of *hic, hæc, hoc*, vouched for my advances in the dead languages. My sire appreciated neat penmanship and readiness in accounts; and aunt Rebecca knew not what to think of my genius when I revealed to her the hour of the day at the antipodes, or, in soliciting a slice of bread, said, '*Da mihi frustum panis?*'

On a misty November morning, Mr Jonas Bartholomew departed for his *alma mater*.

My father bade him a cordial farewell, and I believe, to the grasp of the hand, added something as substantial, to cheer him on the journey. When he was gone, I felt lonely and dispirited; his placid familiarity was pictured to my mind—it appeared like a soft sunset, over which the gloom of parental vigilance was rapidly gathering. Would I now be tolerated in drawing soldiers and horses, instead of squares and triangles?—would I now be enabled to

steal away to the land of Romance—to wander, with a fearful joy, among enchanted gardens, Alpine castles, and mysterious forests, where every nook bristled with bandits?

Although I was destined for one of the learned professions, my father, whose strong practical understanding looked directly to results, was extremely solicitous that I should acquire a knowledge of the ordinary business of the world, as it presented itself in his immediate sphere. To farming affairs and their consequent, early rising, I had shown an unconquerable aversion. Another experiment remained to be tried. Be my future vocation what it might, an acquaintance with book-keeping and bargain-making would be of unquestionable utility. It was, therefore, decided that I should attend during the winter in the woollen drapery shop at E——.

I was not dissatisfied on the announcement of the new arrangement. The town, which I had never visited, save when under the supervision of my seniors, and then but cursorily and at distant intervals, awakened my curiosity. I also cherished the hope that I should there suffer less restraint, and find comrades more to my taste than the monotonous Thorpes. My father had ceased to take

apprentices, and entrusted the subordinate departments of the trade to two active young men, with moderate salaries. I was a favorite with both; but the junior, by the present of a whip, to which an ivory whistle was appended, ranked first in my esteem.

It was not long ere I discovered that expectation had outshot the truth. The labor of folding and unfolding heavy pieces of cloth—of answering every inquirer—and making numberless entries in a day-book, accorded ill with my romantic temperament. My father was rarely absent, as the farm lay lightly on his hands during the season of cold and storm. When he chanced to be called away, his orders were imperative that I should on no pretext quit the shop until the usual messenger arrived to conduct me home. All the members of his circle knew the danger of disobeying him; but on a memorable occasion his command was disregarded. He had hurried off before dawn of a March morn to purchase cattle at a fair held about ten miles from E——. His return was not anticipated until late in the evening, and with shame I acknowledge that his departure, and intended stay, gave me pleasure. I tripped to the town with the levity of a school-boy, exulting in a holyday, and posting myself at the

shop-door, dreamt only of the indolent gratification of gazing around me.

In the afternoon, while surveying objects of passing interest, the sound of a drum and clarionet, with a clamorous accompaniment of shouting-boys, broke upon my ear. I advanced in the direction of the boisterous music, and saw such a merry assemblage that I could hardly forbear taking a part in the sport. A band, dressed in scarlet and gold somewhat tarnished, were playing with might and main, while a humorous fellow, decked in all the colors of the rainbow, and mounted on a piebald horse, performed antics so very comical, that to refrain from laughing was impossible. The procession made a pause exactly in front of our shop; the musicians took breath, and the droll personage on horseback displaying a banner, on which was inscribed in large letters—'The *Sieur Minch's Dominion of Fancy*,' invited the ladies and gentlemen of E——, to the most surprising exhibition in Europe. The entertainments were to consist of ground and lofty tumbling—wonderful feats with cups and balls—wire-dancing, and many astonishing tricks, of which the public could have no proper idea until they witnessed the performance, then about to commence. For ladies and

gentlemen the price of admission was sixpence; children under fourteen years of age were admissible at half the sum.

Lest I should acquire mercenary or prodigal notions, I was denied the smallest allowance of pocket money; and as I wistfully watched the receding pageant, I could not help musing bitterly on the pennyless lot that shut me out from the pleasures of the show. James, the junior shopman, read in my melancholy countenance the wishes of my heart. He beckoned me to a corner, and asked in a whisper, if I longed to see the *Sieur Minch*. Without waiting for a reply he thrust three-pence into my hand, recommended secrecy, and, presenting my cap, exhorted me to come back as soon as possible.

Delighted with 'the Dominion of Fancy,' I cared nothing for the inconvenience I experienced from the pressure of a crowd, composed chiefly of ragged striplings, and the least reputable of the populace. In little more than an hour Mr Merryman informed the spectators that the amusements were at an end. I heard the announcement with regret, and was among the last to retire from the empire of canvass and saw-dust.

The ground on which the *Sieur Minch* had

erected his theatre touched upon the outskirts of the town, where two suburban roads branched off at an acute angle, in the area of which lay a shallow bed of muddy water. A high wind that prevailed in the morning had increased in violence, and as I emerged from 'the Dominion of Fancy,' it whirled the covering from my head, and propelled it within a few yards of the pool. A group of disorderly boys near the spot hallooed at my mischance, and one of them, by a dexterous kick, set my cap, which was almost new, fairly afloat in the discolored element. A triumphant roar of laughter applauded the exploit. I burst into tears, and my distress only increasing the mirth of my persecutors, I sobbed aloud, more in anger than in sorrow.

'What are you doing here, Sir?' cried a voice, that caused my breast to throb like a bird's in the grasp of its captor. 'What are you doing here, Sir?' repeated my father, who was just returning from the fair.

I sprang into the pool—rescued my cap, and, unmindful of the water by which it was thoroughly soaked, clapt it upon my crown.

My father alighted from his horse, and again demanded what had brought me there, and in such company.

I stood shivering and silent. The boy whose malignity had proved the indirect source of my misfortune, pointing to the scene of my disobedience, exclaimed that I had been at Minch's exhibition, which was but a few minutes closed.

My father pulled off my cap—bound a silk handkerchief around my head—placed me behind him on the croup of the saddle, and rode home without saying another syllable.

I was left in suspense until the conclusion of our evening meal, when I was brought up for judgment in presence of my aunt, who declared that she could not intercede for any creature so graceless as to steal to the haunts of godless vagabonds. I was examined narrowly, to ascertain under whose authority I had transgressed, and from what quarter I had derived the means. I made the humblest acknowledgment of guilt, and vowed never to do the like again. But although a full pardon was offered as the reward of a discovery, I resolved to endure the worst rather than betray my poor friend James. Finding me firm, no further questions were asked. I was lectured on the enormity of the offence, aggravated by the obstinate concealment of my adviser's name, ordered to bed, and warned to expect punishment in the morning.

I knew but too well that whatever my fa-

ther promised, whether of good or ill, he was bent to execute. He had procrastinated the penalty of my error, mistrusting the warmth of his temper, and fearing to give to irritation more than he owed to justice. Yet he would have been more merciful to me, and lenient to himself, had he inflicted instant correction. I had never received serious chastisement, and nervous terror exaggerated both the shame and the suffering. To my accustomed form of prayer I added an earnest petition that the threatening hand might be averted. Supplication was not the harbinger of peace. My feverish cheek felt as it would scorch the pillow. I dreamt of drowning, and of being mangled by savage beasts. It was the first night of mental misery.

I was awakened by the shrill note of my canary. He reminded his master that it was time to furnish his diurnal rations.

'Patience, dear Tom!' said I, turning towards the cage. My cap was suspended near it, soiled and out of shape. Recoiling, I covered up my face. A heavy foot ascended the stairs—my father kept his word.

CHAPTER III.

My business education was soon brought to a close. From the period of dereliction I was forbidden to appear in the shop, unless when under paternal inspection. I was at no pains to conceal the irksomeness of duties thus regulated. I was chidden in presence of strangers in terms very mortifying, and retorted the supposed indignity by sullenness and inattention to the customers. My conduct was reported to my father, who ordered me to remain at home until the return of Mr Jonas. After his arrival a circumstance occurred not unworthy of being related.

High-sounding words had peculiar charms for me. I loved the sonorous names, as well as the surpassing fables, of heathen mythology, and was partial to geography and the globes, of which I understood not a tittle, on account of their 'longitude and latitude—equinoctial and meridian—azimuth circles and ecliptic'—appellatives of distant countries and constellations. These I used to amuse myself by repeating when in bed, in a sort of singing tone, and also before my aunt, and our old female servant,

who were half afraid that the pressure of learning would turn my brain. I had read of magic and its operations, and of the influence of the stars, and I fancifully invested the magnificent phrases I had collected with attributes of congenial mystery. The twelve signs of the Zodiac were, in an especial manner, endeared to my imagination.

There was a fine garden of early fruits about three miles from our house, the owner of which had invited me to visit it, along, with the two sons of a neighboring farmer. After much persuasion I obtained leave to go, with many emphatic admonitions to return by sunset. My companions were older than I—simple, good-humored lads. The day was beautiful, and we were as happy as it was long. We fished for minnows—explored the nests of birds and bees, and feasted on the most delicious berries of every variety of color and flavor. Evening approached all too fast, and regretfully I warned my comrades that it was time to retrace our steps. They detained me under different pretences, until twilight was setting in, when we departed, laden with fruit, and the spoils procured in our rambles.

Part of our way lay through a wooded valley, which had a lonesome effect in the declin-

ing light. The discourse turned upon ghosts, goblins, and fairies, with whom I boasted an intimate acquaintance. I was listened to with a deference that increased as the road became more solitary. While we proceeded I spoke of the twelve signs of the Zodiac, and of the extraordinary power I held over them. Questioned as to what they were like, I described them as wonderful beings living where the sun went down, in palaces of fire, called azimuth circles. Entering a glade, in the centre of which stood the trunk of a blighted oak, I rested beside it, and informed my friends, who seemed to doubt my description, that, if they had courage to behold them, I would there favor them with a sight of the twelve signs of the Zodiac, snorting like mad horses caparisoned in flame. I began to chaunt a medley of polysyllables, in imitation of a conjuror muttering a spell, when my terrified companions, imploring me to desist, seconded their entreaties by an offer of all they had gathered at the garden. This I declined, and suggested, instead, an exchange of toys with one of the brothers, who possessed a plaything I greatly coveted, though less expensive than my own. He innocently agreed to the proposed barter, and I put an end to the conjuration, secretly elated by my superior saga-

city.—Such was the deception practised by a child upon children; an example to philosophic minds, of the process by which priestcraft may have forged the machinery of superstition in the infancy of man.

Though sporting thus with the timidity of others, I was by no means free from similar fears myself. I had read and heard too much of phantoms not to be the slave of a thousand absurd conceits. On this occasion, I suffered a punishment equally equitable and severe, had it been given for duping my associates, in place of outstaying the leave of absence. I was obliged to go to bed in the dark, which I dreaded exceedingly. I would almost have preferred a whipping, and that, I believe, would have been my lot, in addition, but for the earnest mediation of my aunt.

Mr Jonas remained with us another year, his yoke sitting as easy on me as before. His mode of inculcating an acquaintance with the higher branches of learning was more pleasant than profitable. In translating Latin, or Greek; he never permitted me to pause for the interpretation of an obscure word, but anticipated every deficiency. Chiefly self-taught, his prosody was lamentably bad, and mine became proportionably vicious. I knew nothing

of mathematical science beyond the delineation of geometrical figures. These I copied into a handsome book; and, having a taste for drawing, embellished them with curious devices. My father was led to consider this volume, and one containing Latin exercises, written under the eye of my tutor, as unerring testimonials of a satisfactory progress. He exhibited them with feelings not to be misunderstood, to persons on whose judgment he thought he could rely. They did, as people too frequently do in such circumstances,—suited their answers to the inclination of the inquirer. But, whatever might be the extent of paternal delight in my attainments, it was carefully concealed from me, under the impression that juvenile vanity would be inflated, and the wholesome rigor of discipline injuriously relaxed, by the open recognition of desert.

The periodical celebration of the sacrament was observed in our family according to the strictest rites of Presbyterianism, which generally enjoin attendance on public worship on two secular days previous, and one posterior, to the Sabbath set apart for the ordinance. The constraint and austerity that accompanied these observances gave me a dislike to their occurrence, incapable as I was of appreciating

their spiritual importance. One approached which I was extremely anxious to evade, not less from an indisposition to involuntary confinement, than from the severity of the weather. On Thursday and Saturday, however, I was obliged to go, and was ordered to rise sometimes on Sunday morning, as the length of the service demanded an earlier commencement than usual. In the interval I happened to discover a romance belonging to Mr Bartholomew, who was then on a visit at our pastor's. It was styled 'The Horrors of Oakendale Abbey'—a name after my own heart. Regarding it as a treasure, I placed it beneath my pillow; and, awaking at the dawn of morning, dived into its contents. These proved so seductive, that, to enjoy them without interruption, I determined on pleading illness as an excuse for staying at home.

When the household assembled to prayer, my absence was perceived, and my aunt went herself to call me. In answer to her summons I said that I was unwell, and would rather not rise. She asked the nature of my complaint; I told her it was violent headach. I declined the offer of food, lest the truth should be suspected; and she quitted the apartment, apparently impressed with the conviction that I could not mingle with safety in the devotions of the day.

In about an hour afterwards, I noted the bustle of departure, and, concluding that I ran no risk of detection, brought forth the romance from its hiding-place and soon lost myself in its perusal. Alarmed by the sudden opening of the door, I had barely time to thrust the forbidden volume under the clothes, ere my father was by the bed-side. He looked hard at me for an instant, then, by a jerk of the sheet, stripped me of all covering but the night dress, and laid bare 'The Horrors of Oakendale Abbey.' Examining its title page, he commanded me to prepare immediately for church. I obeyed him with the tremulousness of a discovered felon.

Divine service lasted for above six successive hours, and, at its termination, I was really ill, partly for want of a regular breakfast, as a substitute for which my aunt secretly conveyed me some slices of bread, and partly from an indescribable apprehension of the consequences of my duplicity. Nothing occurred on that day inconsistent with the solemnity of a Christian Sabbath.

On the next, the Rev. Jeremiah Thorpe, and the co-operating clergymen, were to dine at our house. In the morning my father de-

spatched a messenger for my tutor, and, on his arrival, I was ordered into their presence. The captured volume was produced, and I was sternly desired to explain how it came into my hands. I stood trembling, with sealed lips and downcast looks. Though threatened with the heaviest punishment of contumacy, I still maintained silence.

My benevolent teacher was sadly perplexed, between compassion for me and fear for himself, but the latter gave way, and he stated that I must have obtained the book from his collection, and would naturally conceive there was no impropriety in reading it. My father, coldly observing that this did not exculpate me from the crime of telling a wilful falsehood to avoid the performance of a sacred duty, dismissed me to the solitude of my room. There my meals were served up to me, and there I was confined during the stay of Mr Thorpe and his friends,—an unprecedented humiliation.

Early on Tuesday, Mr Bartholomew made his appearance, as I supposed, to recommence his lessons. Seeking for the signs of pleasing intelligence in his kindly countenance, it seemed unusually troubled. He sat down, drew me towards him, and, placing my hands in his, said, in a faltering tone, that he came to bid

me farewell, Mr Earnshaw having dispensed with his services. I was moved to weeping. Though his own eyes were not dry, he did his best to comfort me; but his endeavors were ineffectual.—My misconduct was to blame for all!

His dismissal had been conveyed to him in a letter, enclosing a quarter's salary above his claim. My father had gone abroad to escape remonstrance, or a parting interview. His mind was in a state not more enviable than ours. Harshness, in action, was uncongenial to his nature—and pursuing his inflexible notions of right both fretted and distressed him. But his resolves were unalterable as the Median and Persian laws—and of that Mr Jonas was sufficiently assured to deem our separation permanent.

The worthy man gave me his blessing at parting, and enjoined me to honor my father, and obey him, in whatever he required, as he would inculcate nothing but that which was dictated by conscience and affection. He cautioned me against the slightest deviation from the truth, as offensive to our Maker, and degrading in the estimation of our fellow creatures—and admitted his error in introducing books into the house of which his employer

disapproved, and which he himself *could not* honestly recommend to the immature judgment of youth.

My English education was supposed to be complete, and I was entered at a classical school, kept by a French priest, called Dubois, a name that appears to be common to all our expatriated neighbors. He had been settled twenty years at E——, and was popular among the middle ranks, from his liberality of sentiment and the suavity of his manners. There were various reasons for fixing me with him, in preference to other and more competent teachers in the place. His terms were the lowest—he taught his native tongue with the Parisian accent; but the paramount inducement was his agreeing to examine me every Saturday in the Presbyterian Catechism. This he consented to do, with the utmost cheerfulness, for a trifling consideration.

Had Scaliger, Lipsius, Cronovius, or any other of the puissant commentators, whose critical powers raised them almost to an equality with the authors on whom they desecanted, witnessed the economy of the Abbe's establishment, and listened to the barbarous jargon that profaned Ionian and Ausonian song, unutterable must have been his disgust, pro-

found his indignation. In his best days the Abbe's scholarship would have failed to secure him his daily bread in his own country, and his subsequent position in a foreign land augmented his incapacity. His Anglo-Gallic pronunciation made it impossible, for one not familiar with his mode, to follow his prelections; and his style of translation, from misconception of the fitting English phraseology, was often ludicrously inappropriate. In addition to this, he was an enthusiastic musician; and though fifty years of age, and a clergyman of unblemished reputation, not a little vain of his person.

There were a number of grown-up idle boys at the school, and they did just as they pleased. While the Abbe, keeping time, fingered his flute or his violin, they wasted time in countless mischievous inventions. My bashful inexperience, comparative weakness, the quaint cut of my coat, and especially the Saturday's catechetical examinations, caused them to make me the continual butt of their practical jests. I was obliged to fight lads bigger than myself, and at the risk of being thrice beaten—by my opponent, by the teacher, and by my father. Some of my class-fellows were remarkable for humor, and indulged it upon the Abbe's pecu-

harities. When certain words, which he pronounced very oddly, occurred in my lesson, a twitch of the skirt reminded me of a companion's mimicry, and made me laugh outright. For this I was saluted with a smart slap of the ratan. My frolicsome comrades thought it excellent pleasantry.

Unless in the heat of summer, M. Dubois placed his magisterial chair in front of the fire, where he loved to sit complacently surveying a well-turned limb, the calf of which was advantageously poised upon his knee. In the midst of his meditations an explosion of powder, produced by an adept in pyrotechnics, would shoot a shower of cinders and live coals on his faultless stockings, and decorous inexpressibles. During the first burst of his resentment, the chief conspirators in such pranks looked towards me, then to him, ejaculating my name, as if in expostulation. This had the effect of bringing down the storm upon my hapless head; and so strong was the mischievous confederacy, that defence, however valid, was of no avail. I was assailed by a still more provoking species of annoyance, founded upon the way in which the Abbe propounded the first question of the Catechism, 'What is the chief end of man?' Whenever my persecutors could

taunt me with impunity, my ears were sure to be stunned by cries of 'Sare, Vat is de shef end off man?'

I was at last released from this lawless seminary, where there was little to be learned save the elements of misrule. The teacher had left his flock to their own discretion for an hour, having gone, at the invitation of an itinerant Italian, to inspect an inestimable fiddle, called, by the cunning in catgut, a Cremona. The moment his back was turned, the school was in an uproar. I was planted demurely in a corner, reading the 'Persian Tales,' when two arch-tyrants, seizing my arms and holding me fast, covered my eyelids with plasters of cobbler's-wax, which they continued to press until it firmly adhered. I experienced the terrors of sudden blindness, and, in a transport of pain and anger, embittered by shouts and jeers, struggled to remove the materials of torment. The warmth of my hands only aggravated the evil, and my eyelids became closely glued together. I was half frantic, when the approach of 'the master' was announced. My ingenious torturers began to console me, and proposed to take off the wax. Without waiting their victim's consent, they applied themselves to their purpose, and with such dili-

gence, that, in a few seconds, I recovered my sight, but at the expense of the eyelashes, which were nearly eradicated.

Sobs, that I could not smother, revealed my injuries to the Abbe, who, shocked at the deliberate cruelty of the action, threatened general chastisement unless the offenders were pointed out. I could not be prevailed upon to inform against them, although my heart was bursting from unrequited wrong. The rest of their school-mates, fearful of future vengeance, kept the secret equally well. Remedies were applied to alleviate my sufferings, and I went away, promising not to tell stories at home.

I was faithful to my pledge, but my eyes gave evidence of something amiss, and my father's inquiries of my fellow-pupils ascertained the particulars of the maladventure. I have been told that he waited upon the poor Abbe, and admonished him in a tone he long remembered. The only notice he took of the matter to me was, on the next day, when, as I packed my satchel, he asked whither I was going? I answered, to school. 'Throw down your books,' said he, 'you go not there today—no—nor to-morrow.'

CHAPTER IV.

Our pastor's eldest son, Mr Theophilus Thorpe, a young man of liberal acquirements and good abilities, who had just finished his theological studies, undertook to keep my ancient literature from becoming obsolete, until I should again be consigned to scholastic authority. The ardor with which he prosecuted his immediate pursuits, left him only an hour daily to devote to me. This was far too scanty an allowance for my wants. He felt it to be so, and strongly recommended my father to perfect my education, by confiding me to the care of Dr Dyson, who boarded young gentlemen, and prepared them for the universities, at Mount Monasticon Academy, thirty miles from E——. My progress, he doubted not, would amply repay the increase of expenditure. Upon my manifold deficiencies he prudently declined any comment.

The matter having been canvassed in our family month after month, the counsel of Mr Theophilus was finally adopted. An outfit was provided, and the plan of travelling arrang-

ed, with as busy a note of preparation as if the hope of the house had been about to explore the mysterious windings of the Niger. Many a little present had my aunt contrived for me—many an advice did she give me not to forget the God of my fathers—and many a kiss she imprinted on my pale cheek, dewy with her tears, as she bade me farewell in the gray dawn of the morning.

A sober vehicle, a light, covered cart, comfortably fitted up for Sabbath-day uses, conveyed us to Mount Monasticon. This had been the manorial residence of a forgotten race, and the traces of former splendor alarmingly abounded. A rectilinear avenue, girt with giant oaks, inspired me with awe, which grew to absolute terror, when old Crossbow rested his tired limbs in front of an august portico, elevated on six snow-white steps. My father plied the lion-faced knocker as lustily and carelessly as if he had been hammering a nail into a barn door. I thought him a bold man, and would have given the world to have been once more bounding over the unornamented lawn at Thorncroft.

A powdered servant, formidably attired in parti-colored garments, ushered us into the largest apartment I had ever beheld. My spirit

died within me as I surveyed the mantel-piece of sculptured marble—the immense mirror—the dusky paintings, and the various articles of luxury by which I was surrounded. I was dressed in my best clothes, yet I suspected their unworthiness of the place. My father's top-boots, and buck-skin breeches, I regarded as utterly unseasonable.

The monarch of the mansion joined us, and the chill of introduction was over. Doctor Trithemius Dyson, the 'great Græcist,' was an unbeneficed clergyman of the Established Church, tenacious, in spite of personal neglect, of its discipline, its pomp, and its privileges. In it, all his notions of moral, mental, or external grandeur, converged; and with him sectarianism was a species of delinquency equally sordid and sinful. His ideas were faithfully reflected by his lady, and extravagantly dilated by his two assistants. I shall remember the Doctor's person, dress, and manner, as long as I live. He was between forty and fifty years of age—above the middle size, erect, and sinewy—his features sharp and querulous—his brow fretted with thin, peevish wrinkles—his mouth pursed on one side by a habit of contracting it, and making a sibillating sound, when hearkening to what he disliked. He was

arrayed in complete sables, tastefully cut; but he violated the propriety of his costume by an uneasy trick of pulling up the waistband of his lower garments continually, and without any ostensible cause.

My father entered upon preliminaries, and I attended vigilantly to the conversation. He informed the Doctor of his wish to place me under his charge to finish a classical education, already far advanced, with a view to qualify me for a professional course at a university.

‘What profession?’

‘A physician.’

‘What university?’

‘Glasgow.’

The Doctor contracted the corner of his mouth, and made the habitual sound between chirping and hissing.

‘Glasgow or Edinburgh,’ added my father. ‘A degree at an English university is beyond my means.’

The Doctor bowed.

The next point was a question of delicate adjustment—the amount of annual remuneration. This occupied some minutes, an entrance-fee having proved a grievous stumbling-block to my father. I was sorely confounded

by his tradesmanlike higgling. I feared he would disgrace us both. The pecuniary difficulty set at rest, a still more important affair was to be discussed—my religious exercises.

‘We are of the Presbyterian persuasion,’ said my father.

The Doctor commenced his oral music.

‘And,’ continued he, ‘I have a natural wish that my son should worship publicly with those of his own communion.’

The Doctor, hitching up his inexpressibles, replied that such a thing was impossible at Mount Monasticon, where there was not within ten miles a single dissenter. On this intimation his visitor looked as if he were disposed to annul the agreement; but he contented himself by preferring a request concerning the exact appropriation of my Sabbath hours, in the manner observed at Thorncroft. An assent obtained, he took leave, intending to drive part of the way homeward that night.

Strikingly characteristic of my father’s general bearing to me was the circumstance of our separation. We walked together, by the side of Crossbow, to the termination of the avenue; there he stopped, and talked about my future correspondence. When this was arranged, he

expatiated on the stately appearance of *Dr Dyson's* residence, and asked if I did not think it much finer than home. I exclaimed that it was—although at the moment I would willingly have relinquished all participation in its splendor for the quiet attic room sacred to the slumbers of *Mr Jonas*. The liveliness of my affirmative offended him, and he lectured on my pride and ingratitude with unwonted harshness. Censure so undeserved, and at such a time, cut me to the soul. He hurried into the vehicle, without even saying, good-bye, *Robert*. The roll of the receding wheels smote gratefully upon my ear. I would have cared little had they passed over me—I felt so desolate. I could not then have believed that so unkind a parting originated in attachment self-distrustingly strong.

My fellow-pupils were above thirty in number, mostly the sons of men of opulence. In adventitious circumstances, I was the least fortunate at the school. My compeers were smartly dressed—had an allowance of pocket-money, with an abundance of playthings, and were frequently invited, at the end of the week, to the houses of the neighboring gentry. To these gratifications I was a stranger. The last was denied to my station; the others my father

withheld, from the conviction that they would generate indolence and ostentatious folly. I was provided with substantial clothing, but it was always fashioned in a style that greatly anticipated my growth. A vexation of this kind may be trifling to a philosopher—to a philosopher's unfriended heir at a seminary like Mount Monasticon, it would prove sufficiently serious. Boys, at a public school, should never be placed upon a footing of inequality with their fellows. They are soon taught the perception of their inferiority, which is alike detrimental to their happiness and independence.

I had, professedly, read a considerable number of Latin and Greek authors; and upon my nominal advances had my father grounded his representations and injunctions to Dr Dyson. In reality, however, I was ignorant of both languages, with the exception of a facility of translating passages conned times innumerable, and the remembrance of declensions and conjugations, with grammatical rules I was unable to apply. Mythology, and Greek and Roman history, I thoroughly understood. It was desired and expected by my father that I should not retrograde in my studies, which, as new masters have new modes, he cautiously guarded against by his premonitions. I was, accordingly, enrolled in the senior classes.

My probationary attempt was signally unfortunate. I have said that my prosody was vicious; I might term it execrable, for M. Dubois completed what Mr Bartholomew had begun. I knew no more of dactyl or spondee than I did of the 'Talmud. Now it happened that Mount Monasticon academy was especially famed for the purity of its classical enunciation, and its head was extremely solicitous to sustain its reputation in this particular. The morning of my introduction to the school, I was submitted to a private trial upon the *Æneid* of Virgil, which I construed fluently, but read in a way that disgusted my examiner, who ordered me to join a class then repeating their lesson in Alvari's prosody to the chief assistant.

The assistant's name was Pack. 'The images of those we have loved dwell long in recollection; and so, I grieve to say, do the images of those we have not loved. At this hour enmity to any human being is distant from my heart; and yet, were I to recognize the tall, slim, modishly attired figure of this man, his light locks, and his icy, supercilious smile, I should be seriously discomposed. I used to perplex myself endeavoring to account for his perverse pleasure in rendering me miserable. I have heard and seen too much of the abuse

of authority, in later years, to wonder at the most fantastic freak of cruelty played by one creature of clay upon another.

Mr Pack desired me to translate the rule *M*, in the section *De Ultimis Syllabis*—‘*M vorat Ecthlipsis: prisce breviare solebant.*’ I had never looked at the rule before—I blushed—hesitated—was embarrassed. My class-fellows exchanged significant nods and winks. The usher, with asperity, commanded me to proceed. I construed it thus:—*M*—the letter *M*—*vorat*, devours; *Ecthlipsis*, eclipse; *prisce*, the fishes; *solebant*, are accustomed; *breviare*, to cut the matter short! A subdued peal of laughter rolled along the circle. Mr Pack complimented me with a sneer, and my ‘eclipse’ being converted into an ‘eclipse of the moon,’ the humorists of the establishment were furnished with a more tormenting cry than the ‘*Vat is de shef end off man*’ of the Abbe’s turbulent legion.

This unlucky beginning was the omen of my academical career. I was retained in the higher grades of instruction, in deference to paternal solicitude; but my position was at the base, of which I was invariably the crowning ornament. I neither shared the rewards nor the chastisements dealt out to the general body. Yet though the *ferula* never dishonored my palm, I was the constant object of sarcas-

tic remarks, not less depressing than corporeal castigation. My father's rigid sovereignty had, in a measure, broken me in for mental thralldom; had it been otherwise, this must have quite overlaid my spirit. As it was, I lost every spark of emulation—every hope of success, and began despondingly to acquiesce in the oft-expressed opinion that I was an incorrigible blockhead. The continual grinding of reprehension will deaden the energies of the generous mind, to which judicious encouragement is a health-infusing stimulant. Like the element that elevates the aeronaut above the mists of the nether world, considerate praise buoys up the soul of youth to aspirations after a loftier field of enterprise than its accustomed scene of triumph.

Dr Dyson had the vulgar attribute of genius—eccentricity. In the period of the year when fires were burned in the school-room, he practised a pastime, which as I was not a sufferer by it, would, I confess, have tickled me greatly, could I have dared to entertain merriment when my preceptor was the agent. While disburthening a class of their tasks, he frequently reduced the nearest members to an awkward dilemma. Having brought the massive poker to a red heat, he caused it

to describe a circle in the air, catching it adroitly in its descent by the temperate extremity. If the head classmen gave his feat the tribute of a smile, he greeted them with some transient but piquant stripes, for their impertinent familiarity; if they affected a stoical demeanor, he bestowed an awakening flagellation for their sullen indifference.

There was a seat allotted to each scholar, and mine fell in a disagreeable neighborhood. I was between Scylla and Charybdis—Peel on the right—Gower on the left. They were alike haughty and phlegmatic, alike vain of their gold watches and baubles; equally full of family carriages and high connections: but while Gower shunned the ‘draper’s boy,’ like leprosy, he did not descend to the minute malignities of Peel. The physical appearance, too, of the former, harmonized with his pretensions; the latter, on the contrary, was a broad-backed, sleepy-eyed, anti-patrician looking lad. A line of separation was drawn by the two magnates, in the nature of a *cordon sanitaire*, the integrity of which, in political phrase, I was forbidden to violate. I was to consider their books—their very apparel—*tabooed*. If I addressed a random word to Gower, he surveyed me for a second, with the drooping eye-lid exhibited in

the common portraits of Lord Byron, then turned away in silent disdain. In a similar case, Peel's drawling tone would admonish my presumption, telling me to bear in mind, that the draper who cut the cloth, was but a slight remove above the tailor who fashioned it. How I longed but for one hour of manhood, when a few years' seniority would form no insuperable barrier to retaliation !

I had only a single friend—Frank Rodney—a youth two or three years older than I was; less robust than Peel, and altogether of a different mould. He was the son of a country gentleman, whose seat was in the vicinity of Thorncroft. Coming from the same district, he felt an interest in me, which increased on perceiving my forlorn condition. I was proud of his attentions, for he was a general favorite, and worthy of popularity. He was straight as an arrow; good humor danced in his bright eyes; the rose of Lancaster shed a perpetual summer upon his cheek; his glossy locks clustered above an open brow, and his features were defined with the soft precision of sculpture. No cloud ever hung upon his spirits; excelling in athletic sports, in which he delighted, and destined for a military life, he had no respect for the ancients, no ambition to be-

come mighty in Horatian metres, or the Æolic digamma. Many auricular impressions did he receive from the chastening hand of his indignant preceptor, but the punishment and its object faded from his memory, almost as fast as the rush of color, which followed his humiliation, returned to its fountain.

Peel was engaged at bowls, when I, running across the green, accidentally intercepted his cast. Irritated at the interruption, he rolled a bowl after me, which, tripping me in my career, produced a violent fall. My knee was severely hurt, and while I smarted from the pain, the enemy exulted in the certainty of his aim. This was less tolerable than the injury itself, and I could not refrain from venting the gall of resentment. Frank Rodney, attracted to the spot by my reproaches, insisted on Peel apologizing for the wrong I had sustained. The latter, sulkily demanding what right he had to interfere, scornfully observed that it would be a pretty thing for him to beg pardon of a tape-seller's son. 'Then you shall beg both his and mine,' said Frank, inflicting a blow that caused him to recoil several paces, and which he quickly followed up by another. Gower interposed, and they separated. A formal complaint was preferred against Rodney, who

underwent severe penance; but our *friendship* was firmly cemented, and I experienced subsequently the salutary effects of his protection.

There was a yearly examination, at which premiums were awarded, held at Mount Monasticon. To this opportunity of displaying talent my father looked with great anxiety, morally persuaded that his son would be pre-eminent in the honorable contest. My palpable deficiencies prevented Dr Dyson from bringing me forward on the first of these occasions that occurred. This my father understood to be owing to my recent acquaintance with a new system of instruction. His hopes and my fears were fixed upon the next. I knew myself to be intrinsically little improved, and I had a horror of going home at the vacation, without a testimonial that money had not been lavished upon me in vain. As the period drew nigh, I became restless and unhappy.

The eventful day arrived, and passed without a laurel for Rodney, or for me. We had arranged to travel together in returning to our respective abodes. When we commenced our journey, wide was the contrast between us. He was rosy and joyous as a Grecian youth, bounding to a festival;—I resembled a palid victim, about to be immolated at the altar of a

barbarian deity. I revealed to him the secret of my sorrow, and he did his best to comfort me. His well meant efforts were unavailing. I might agree with him that premiums were not always the test of merit, and it was quite true that he shared my disgrace, if disgrace it were,—but would our opinion, or his example, justify me in the sight of him to whom I was accountable?

Frank accompanied me to the door, and seeing me smilingly received, bade a cheerful good even. My aunt led the way to the snug parlor, where she had provided a repast, comprising a variety of rustic delicacies. She was expressing her surprise that I had grown so tall since our last meeting, when my father, who had been summoned to some household affairs after our salute, entered the room.

‘ Well, Robert,’ said he, ‘ what about the premiums?’

‘ The premiums, Sir?’

‘ Yes, the premiums.’

‘ Why, Sir, Dr Dyson ’s such a strange teacher——’

‘ Where ’s your voice, Sirrah?—speak that I may hear you!’

‘ Frank Rodney got no premium, Sir.’

‘ But have you got none?’

‘Not this time, Sir.’

‘Then begone from my presence, and never let me see your face again. Bury yourself in bed, you sluggard, where you have wasted your time and my substance!’

He paced the apartment in a fever of emotion. I moved to obey him, and notwithstanding my aunt’s counter exertions to induce me to eat, fled to my chamber, where, prostrate on the bed, I gave scope to the agitation of my bosom. I heard the murmur of discordant discussion beneath, and the fitful swell of my father’s voice reprobating all appeal on my behalf. Alas! thought I, this is a dreary welcome!

About the usual hour of repose, the door was noiselessly opened, and aunt Rebecca approached with a nice supper on a tray.

‘Your father is very angry, Robert,’ said she, ‘he blames your neglect for the loss of these premiums; and, indeed, I wish you had gained them, for our friends were led to expect you would, after the expense incurred for your learning. But what’s past cannot be recalled—endeavor to eat something, and we’ll strive to pacify your father tomorrow. Good night, child! I hope you have not forgotten to pray regularly, morning and evening: Good night, Robert!’

‘ Good night, dearest aunt!’

I was still undressed. I seated myself opposite the viands, of which, tempting though they were, I could not taste a morsel. Reclining partially on the bed, I fell into a train of melancholy musing. The weariness of travel imperceptibly weighed down my eyelids. Starting from a half hour’s slumber, I could scarcely persuade myself that I was at home. The curtains, with their grotesque pattern, the print of Elisha and the Shunamite’s son, in its black oak frame, assured me it was no dream. The supper—O, too true! too true!

On the spot where my orisons were breathed of old, I again bent in humble adoration to an Almighty Father. Nor was thy name omitted, offended parent, when invoking countless blessings on those I loved! I laid me down to rest with a soul that tasted of tranquillity, though the sense of bitterness had not passed away.

CHAPTER V.

Paternal favor was with difficulty regained. At length, however, by the representations of friends, who were aware of Dr Dyson's anti-sectarian prejudices, united to the spontaneous evidence of Frank Rodney, who visited us frequently, and protested I had sustained foul play, my lost position was apparently recovered. The classics had fallen into disrepute, and it was ruled that they should receive a valediction. To fill up the interval previous to entering college, I was sent to learn the art of compounding medicine with Mr Penrose, our apothecary.

Rodney called upon me in this new capacity, and laughed to see me in the shop attire 'culling of simples.' Very opposite was his equipment to my mechanical appointments. A costume, in which fashion was accommodated to his age and the character of his form, gave full effect to his blossoming beauty. He backed like an Arab, a steed of high blood and perfect symmetry, and his attendant dogs were models of docility and elegance. He seemed so unconscious of his attractions, that to refuse him

admiration was impossible. My contentment would have been less disturbed had our intimacy ceased to exist.

He was the eldest son of Mr Rodney, of St Aymers, a gentleman of fair estate and ancient ancestry. To qualify him for the better discharge of the duties of his station, he was about to be transferred to the university, and thence to the army for such a term of service as might accomplish him in the knowledge of men and manners. Previous to his departure for Oxford, I was invited to spend a few days at the family mansion.

My father was unwilling to sanction acceptance of the invitation, from a dislike to whatever bordered on obligation to his superiors in fortune, and an apprehension that intercourse with the affluent would create a love of luxury and aversion to necessary toil. The affectionate importunity of my aunt succeeded in obtaining a reluctant leave of absence for one day and night; that expired, I was, on pain of severe displeasure, to return to my employment.

The dim groves, emerald meadows, transparent waters, gorgeous pavilions, and castellated fabrics of romance, arose in imagination, when before me lay the antique hall of St

Aÿmers, with its rich umbrage of oak and pine, its verdant slopes, cloud-reflecting lake, fugacious rills, and picturesque pleasure-domes. Mr Rodney's just perception and refined taste had fostered instead of forcing nature, and each prominent feature of his ample demesne, like a lovely bride fitly apparelled, had its appropriate ornament. The grounds and gardens were not converted into nursing receptacles for puny plants, languishing after the quickening influence of a tropical sun. The buildings were not profaned by the meretricious union of Greek and English architecture, resembling the revolting incorporation of hostile forms in the senseless objects of pagan worship. No weather-bronzed statue bore silent testimony to the infelicity of the clime. No rebellious fountain, crinating its fashioner, refused to add its diminutive trickle to the ever-flowing stream and fertilizing shower. To the sky and the soil art had assimilated its embellishments; and the result of its labors was a scene abounding in the majestic graces of a British landscape, which shone serenely superior to the proudest array of borrowed blandishments from a foreign land. Little have they meditated on the munificent wisdom that intersected an exuberant globe by

mountains, seas, and rivers—that clad one section in greenness always vernal, another in a wintry vesture of perennial snow—who have failed in discovering in its minutest divisions a material as well as an intellectual genius, calculated, when freely expanded, to bring forth, in their most captivating guise, the latent seeds of grandeur and of beauty. Nature is impatient of uniformity, and showers, with a liberal hand, the elements of variety. Mountains of granite invited the Egyptian's ponderous chisel; quarries of purest marble courted the delicate workmanship of Greece; a humid atmosphere would have frustrated the achievements of both.

The nervousness, which as usual accompanied an introduction into a new sphere of society, was speedily dispelled by the reception I experienced at St Aymers. The glad abundance of fruits and flowers which diversified the foliage of plant and tree, ministered less to the benignity of this silvan paradise than did its bright assemblage of happy faces. Mr and Mrs Rodney had no wish beyond the limits of their domestic circle, unless such as philanthropy dictated. Their children and dependants were emulous of their smiles; around them the despotism of patriarchal gov-

ernment was unknown; to signify *their will* was to be obeyed with pleasure. As the companion of their son, I met an exhilarating welcome. A change had passed upon my being, and I seemed to inhale the air of a milder world. O household harmony!—holiest guardian of the hearth—why is thy shrine so oft made desolate!

Frank was delighted in leading me wherever he could hope to afford wonder or gratification. We threaded the woodlands, rambled over hill and dale, studied the secrets of the brook, gambolled on the fresh-mown hay, and uttered at random every fleeting thought born of our joyous impulses. Weary with wandering, we preferred at sunset the repose of the drawing room. Groups of deer browsing in the park, to me a novelty, led Mr Rodney to discourse on natural history. He displayed a rare collection of insects, with preparations and engravings of the larger animals, and described their habits and organization. By the aid of a powerful microscope, he showed how bountifully Providence has distributed his gifts to his creatures; how that the little living things which spend their brief existence within the limits of a green leaf, are as perfect in their proportions, in

as full possession of the spirit of vitality, as the far-darting eagle or the tree-rending elephant. Great and little, he said, were merely relative terms, invented to express the difference of the magnitude of bodies, but intrinsically inapplicable to animated nature; the gnat being as important in the eye of its Maker as the lion. The same observation applied to time and the duration of life. With Him to whom there was no beginning, to whom there could be no end—before whose space-exploring glance one day is as a thousand years, a thousand years as one day—the few genial hours in which the ephemeral fly flutters its wing, propagates its kind, and dies, are as complete a cycle as the most extended compass allotted to humanity.

The evening was closed with music, for which Ellen, Mr Rodney's eldest daughter, evinced a taste that justified the attention she bestowed on the accomplishment. Her age nearly corresponded to mine. She bore a soft resemblance to her brother; her eyes, beaming with a more tempered brilliancy, the combined expression of her features, tinged with a more touching shade of sensibility. The winning gentleness of her disposition charmed me. I never deemed Frank so enviable as in having

such a sister, and was singularly pained when, in his wild masculine way, he hailed her by the homely appellation of Nell. She played the simple melodies pleasant to an untutored ear, which I loved as early as I could distinguish a tune; which continue to captivate still. For me, music mainly owes its witchery to its power of awakening recollections sweet and tender, of blending beautiful illusions with the surrounding objects—of wafting the soul from the presence of cold reality to a scene where its dearest fantasies are temporarily embodied into action. By notes of this class, I have felt the spirit elevated, the affections purified; whereas the labored intricacies of super-scientific harmony have affected me no farther than the surprising evolutions of a rope-dancer.

After hearing a military march, peculiarly agreeable to Frank, we retired for the night; my friend having arranged that we should sleep in the same apartment. The great clock struck two ere we ceased to converse. We recounted the events we had witnessed at Mount Monasticon, and speculated upon the chances of our future career. Neither was partial to university discipline; though to me it presented a more satisfactory prospect than abiding with Mr Penrose, or remaining un

the restrictive care of my father. Both longed to share the adventurous gaiety of the soldier, to wear the nodding plume, the glittering epaulette, the glancing sword; to be captains of troops and companies; to have our outgoing and incoming heralded by trumpet and drum. Slumber stole upon us in the midst of parades, sieges, and battles; and the 'pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war,' mingled with our visions.

The sun was streaming gorgeously over lake and lawn when I removed the night-drapery from the window. I had already exceeded the appointed period of stay—the consequences of disobedience lowered in the distance, and threw a shadow over the resplendent imagery which had shed rapture on the preceding day. I informed Frank of the ill likely to result from protracted slumber, and of the necessity of immediate departure. He pronounced my father's mandate unreasonable; declared, if I persisted in going so soon, he would consider my friendship a pretence; and argued that, having exposed myself to censure by infringing the letter of the permission, the license might as well be extended, since the effect would be just the same. He, however, was persuaded, that, by accompanying me home, he would propi-

tiate the dreaded anger. I was prevailed upon to prolong the sojourn, though consent was accompanied by inward misgivings. The reasoning that most strongly seconded my secret wishes, was founded upon the error through which I had become amenable to reproof. Having once incurred the peril of punishment, I concluded, with the short-sightedness of youth, that matters could be no worse, and that the wisest plan was to be merry for the moment, and banish reflection. Misguided through boyish levity, I did not calculate how the heart of a parent is wrung by undutifulness, and how deeply it is disquieted by a host of tender fears in the unexplained or contumacious absence of the thoughtless being to whom it is devoted.

Three additional days were dissipated in the amusements of St. Aymers. The last of these was the Sabbath, and my friend and I, rather unwillingly, proceeded with the family to church. I was agreeably disappointed by the curtained and cushioned pew, the decorated interior, the grand-rolling organ, and short sermon, instead of the uncomfortable seat, the roof open to swallows and sparrows, the primitive psalmody, and lengthened discourses, to which we had been accustomed in Mr Thorpe's

humble tabernacle, or the weekly confinement in the little chapel at Mount Monasticon. Attendance on the public ordinances of religion, and decorous behaviour, were the only regulations for the sacred day prescribed by Mr Rodney. He recommended the perusal of the Scriptures, but did not discountenance historical or other works that had any claims to utility; I applauded a system which relieved my memory of its biblical and catechetical toils.

Though not contemplating the procrastination of my return beyond Monday, my motions were accelerated by the arrival of a messenger, despatched by my aunt, who urged the necessity of speeding home without delay. The summons filled me with perturbation. The wish that I should be a frequent visiter at St Aymer's failed to quiet the palpitations of my bosom. I was provided with a handsome horse, and Frank, mounting his gay steed, promptly offered to redeem his pledge of appeasing paternal resentment.

Ere departing from a place which had proved enchanted ground, I sighed to leave behind a memorial of regard for one who bloomed above its choicest rose. At an age like mine, it would perhaps be ridiculous to say that there could have existed a susceptibility of the pas-

sion of love; this is a point for a metaphysician to agitate. I shall content myself by stating, that I never before or since experienced the same emotions towards any living creature, that were inspired by Ellen Rodney. I affected to read in her presence, to enjoy, unobserved, the luxury of stolen glances. The murmur of her mellow voice caused me to quiver like an aspen leaf. Things the most common and valueless touched by her exquisite fingers, were, from that moment, consecrated to my sight. After the first evening spent under her father's roof, she gained an ascendancy over me almost inconceivable for so slight an acquaintance.

The morning of separation she sat at her pretty work-table, in the recess of a window looking out upon the approach to the mansion. I was waiting the call to horse, when she quitted the room for a few minutes. A scrap of blue ribbon, thrown aside as useless, lay upon a box covered with red Morocco leather. I folded it in a paper on which she had written some verses, and deposited it in a pocket of my vest. Opening the red box, I placed under its contents the carnelion heart, treasured and worn for the sake of my mother. I possessed nothing that I prized half so much. Ellen reappeared,

and I bade adieu without daring to meet her eye, or touch her hand. When on horseback, I had not courage to turn towards the window; I rode indifferently, and lest she should remark it, applied the whip with vigor, and hurried off at a pace worthy of Jehu the son of Nimshi.

Frank, after some farewell visits to Wiltshire, was to proceed to Oxford. The hour was beguiled by the repetition of imaginary grievances; my companion denouncing the yoke of the university; I lamenting the unrelenting rigor that forced me to study a profession I detested. We united in thinking that the army was the sphere in which we were destined to astonish the world, and vowed to take the first step to heroism at the earliest opportunity. I grew thoughtful and silent, when the white chimneys of Thorncroft were distinguishable, peering above the circling elms and chesnut trees in the distance. Occupied in revolving the probability of pacifying my father, the discourse rested entirely on the vivacity of Frank, who roused me in the midst of a fit of abstraction, by exclaiming, at the top of his voice, 'The hounds! the hounds!'

Rushing down a declivity crowned with copse-wood, a fox brushed past us, and kept his course along the highway, followed by a

pack of beagles in full cry. Frank, hallooing with might and main, put his horse to his speed, and joined in the chase. Mounted on a mettled animal, that pricked his ears, snorted and curvetted at the clamor of the dogs, my feeble arm, unable to restrain his ardor, barely chafed his blood, and off he dashed like the untamed charger of Mazeppa. I retained my seat, clinging desperately to mane and saddle, until Reynard wheeled into a paddoc, at the extremity of our farm, when the horse, attempting to clear a ditch, pitched me upon the road. A heap of earth, covered with grass, broke the violence of the fall, else I had not survived to tell the tale.

Some laborers conveyed me home. My father, almost distracted, carried me to bed, and hung over me in an agony of supense until surgical skill ascertained the extent of the danger. No injury had been sustained too serious for bleeding and rest to remove. Poor Rodney, learning the accident, would fain have obtained admission to the chamber where I lay; but my aunt, knowing he would be an unwelcome visitor, prudently soothed his apprehensions and hinted that it would be advisable to avoid an interview with her brother. A servant from St Aymers, next morning, inquir-

ed after me in the name of the family. My father returned an answer that precluded further interchange of courtesy or kindness.

I could not venture abroad for a fortnight. During convalescence, I saw nobody but my aunt and Mr Penrose. Both enlarged upon the enormity of the transgression which had been the forerunner of so heavy a judgment. My aunt dwelt upon the sinfulness of pride and vanity, expressing her sorrow that she had been the means of leading me into temptation. She was afraid godliness did not abound among the great, and often referred to the promise, that the Lord would not forget the humble folk who call upon his name. She supplied me with a number of religious books, and insisted on the cultivation of a frame of mind suited to their perusal. It was less from hypocrisy than the wish to gratify her, that I outwardly complied with her injunctions. I turned over the pages of Toplady on Predestination, Boston's Fourfold State, Arrowsmith's Chain of Principles, Isaac Ambrose's War with Devils, The Afflicted Man's Companion, Booth's Reign of Grace, and other works of kindred excellence, without deriving greater benefit than might have been yielded by a 'sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.' I vehemently opposed the

condemnation of my friends at St Aymers, and thought the offence of which I had been guilty, sufficiently expiated by the sufferings I had endured.

My father, vexed that he had been surprised into the manifestation of his affection, endeavored to counterbalance the impressions likely to be created by his weakness. From the time I began to gather strength, he deserted the station he had patiently occupied at the bed-side, where, in the height of my illness, he had concealed himself behind the hangings, anticipating every want. He came no more to the apartment, nor permitted me to conclude, by any indirect token of interest, that he was in the least solicitous for my recovery. When health was quite restored, he declined speaking to me for several weeks. The mode in which he conveyed his sentiments respecting what had occurred, was by observations addressed to a third party in my presence. Of these he was unsparing; insinuating reproaches which I conceived to be unmerited; which he could not have brooked had they been resorted to by another. Over-severity of punishment always defeats its object, hardening, in place of mollifying, the disposition, on which equitable correction might have been the most beneficial

operation. It dishonors Penitence, by attiring her in the weeds of Meanness, and invests Obduracy with the *toga virilis* of Resolution. There are many points of resemblance between unsophisticated boyhood and uncivilized man: none more marked than their mutually ready discernment of, and acquiescent respect for Justice. If parents err in its distribution, it ought to be on the side of clemency. Children cannot penetrate beyond the surface; the look, the word, and the blow, are to them the ultimate signs of condemnation; when these are dealt forth in too hard a measure, they come, like me to indulge the destructive notion that they are the victims of passion, and that the pains or privations, to which they are compelled to submit, are less the penalty of the offence, than the misfortune of the offender.

CHAPTER VI.

Numerous intimations of rooted dislike to the healing art passed unheeded, and I was ordered to be in readiness for a journey to Glasgow, to enter on a medical *curriculum*. I was to be accompanied by a nephew of Mr Penrose, with whom I was to live in partnership during the session. He was a pompous, saturnine young man, considerably my senior, and having been not very harmonious shop-mates, it was presumed that he would the more vigilantly discharge the trust reposed in him of watching and reporting my aberrations from duty.

I was very frugally furnished with pecuniary resources. My father, desirous to curtail all superfluities, had meted his advances by the example of the apothecary, who, having reared and educated his nephew Jonathan gratuitously, was scrupulously nice in reining the excess of his benevolence. I complained, without effect, through the medium of my aunt, respecting the inefficiency of various items of the outfit, and against the burden of my com-

panion. Refusal and upbraiding, on the one side, produced discontent and irritation on the other. I pocketed the sum allotted for the half-year's expenses without a word, or gesture, of thankfulness. The toil by which it had been earned never once occurred to me. My father's brow was a mirror of the heavy November morn that saw me go forth to commence an apprenticeship in the world. His heart was almost breaking, still he would not reveal its throes to his boy, who drooped beneath his coldness. The last sentence he uttered was a reproof for inattention to the disposal of some luggage. He withheld the pressure of his hand, but his eye, long after every other was withdrawn, was rivetted on the vehicle which bore away the beloved of his bosom. Fervently did he pray, that and succeeding nights, for travellers by land and sea; and broken was his rest until the arrival of a letter announcing that I had reached in safety the Daughter of the Clyde.

In Glasgow, lodgings were easily procured. Our hostess was a widowed dame, of the Highland family of Campbell; loquacious busy, and obliging. Having paid my respects to the Professors, after the tributary mode of

the east, I craved the benefit of Mrs Campbell's local knowledge regarding a gentleman to whom I was the bearer of an introductory letter from our minister, Mr Thorpe. The letter was superscribed, Mr Dalrymple, Deacon-Convener, Glasgow; and, from the individual's title, I supposed him to be a dignitary of the church. It seemed singular, when informed that he was a city magistrate; a man of some secular but of very small ecclesiastical consequence.

'To be sure,' said Mrs Campbell, 'the Baillie's an elder o' the kirk.'

'But who's the baillie?' I asked.

'Wha's the baillie!' reiterated my landlady; 'wha should he be but Convener Darumple?—and a braw man he is.'

Unable to comprehend the confusion of titles, I enquired where the great man lived.

'Great man!' cried she; 'toot, ye gowk! he's no sae gran' as a' that; my certies, that wad be rinnin' awa' wi' the harrows. Great man! —he's jist a douce neighbor-like flesher, and bides in Gibbie's-lawn.'

'What's a flesher?'

'An' ye dinna ken what a flesher is? Pity on you! Ilka bairn kens a flesher's—jist a flesher.'

‘And Gibbieslawn—I suppose you mean he lives in Gibbiesland, Mrs Campbell?’

‘Oo, ay?’ replied she.

‘I never heard of Gibbiesland before,’ said I. ‘Pray where is it situated?’

‘It lies twa streets sooth frae this,’ answered my hostess; ‘up the wyn’ to the reicht o’ Tamson’s close.’

Finding all her explanations lost upon a southern ear, she said she would get ‘a bit calant wha’d direck me to the’hoose;’ and calling one of her sons, I was piloted to the spot in a few minutes: when, to my inexpressible amazement, I discovered that Mr Dalrymple of Gibbiesland, Baillie, Deacon-Convener, and elder of the kirk, was a worthy plain-dealing butcher, in easy circumstances.

The civic authority’s shop was in a street contiguous to his residence; and, touching there on the way, I was told that he was at home. Turning into a dark court, abounding in pungent and unsavory odors, my guide bade me ‘gang up the first turnpike, twa flats.’ His direction became more intelligible when he pointed to a spiral stone staircase, in the interior of a round, towerlike structure, and instructed me to ‘chap’ at the second door on the ascent.

A maid-servant, whose hands were more in-

dicative of industry than of cleanliness, led the way into a well-furnished apartment, where Mr Dalrymple, cautiously inspecting my credentials, welcomed me with the blunt cordiality for which the good citizens of Glasgow are remarkable. He was 'blythe,' he said, to do any thing in his power for a friend of Mr Thorpe; and though he had 'nae bairns o' his ain,' he would be glad to see me whenever I could spare an hour from my books. A kirk sitting was at my service; and he hoped I would attend regularly every Sabbath. I discussed a glass of wine, and some sweet cake, which the magistrate called 'short breed,' and retired with multitude of exhortations to beware of late hours, stage-plays and idle company.

A closer acquaintance with medical science did not lessen its repulsiveness. I loathed it in all its branches, and my comrade's threats of reporting to my father the contempt I evinced for the classes, formed a perpetual source of bickering. Jonathan was an enthusiast in chirurgery; and my attempts to eject from our lodgings the putrid fragments of human bodies, which he secreted for dissection, increased the tendency to altercation. I was heartily tired of his society; but though the feeling was perfectly reciprocal, the pleasure

of exercising the mastery, which he indubitably possessed, prevented him from dissolving the ill-assorted connexion.

A person of a different stamp became an inmate at Mrs Campbell's,—a student named Lake, a Jamaica Creole, with more money than discretion. He was an unthinking, dissipated young man, with the perverse ambition to make proselytes common to such characters. By his persuasion, I went, for the first time in my life, to witness the performance of a play.

The tragedy of Julius Cesar, in which an eminent London actor was to sustain the part of Cassius, had crowded the benches of the theatre; and from base to dome the glare of lamps flashed over a brilliant variety of festive forms. The dazzling light, the profusion of painting and gilding, the orchestral harmony, were quite bewildering. This, indeed, thought I, is a temple of felicity, equal to the descriptions of the novelist.

When the curtain drew up, and revealed the Roman mob, I conceived them to be some riotous town's-people, disposed to interrupt the show, and was impatient at the passiveness of the police. As the piece proceeded, I was enraptured by the transitions of scene,

the stateliness of the performers, the thundering declamation, the flourishes of drums and trumpets, the waving of banners, and the din of arms. I was disappointed in Cassius—he talked too like an ordinary mortal; but Mark Antony, who trod the boards like a Hercules, and shouted till the house rang again, afforded me infinite contentment.

At the end of the play, a lady representing a shepherdess, and as handsome as pink drapery, pendent curls, and satin shoes could make her, rather oddly, as it appeared, after so much bloody work, favored the audience with a song. Her opening notes thrilled to the heart. 'The air she chose was the touching pastoral love-plaint, 'Ye banks and braes o' bonny Doon.' It stole upon me like the voice of affection heard unexpectedly in a strange land. Fancy bestowed upon the actress a form of superior beauty, and blended with the mimic landscape the brightest features of the fairest scene in Devon. The only time I had ever heard the song before, was during my sojourn at St Aymers, and then it was warbled by the lips of Ellen Rodney. I longed for solitude, that I might unrestrainedly sigh without pain, and weep without sorrow.

From that night I was devoted to the theatre. Absorbed by its allurements, and the old passion for novel-reading, I was the very slave of imaginative excitement. Dangerous as was such fare for one of my temperament, and prejudicial as it must have been to improvement, it was probably instrumental in protecting from a lower range of recreative follies. Lake's persevering endeavors to seduce to an association in less justifiable pursuits were ineffectual. Delighting to be enveloped in a shroud of idealism, I preferred going alone to the play; and, having once or twice evaded the West-Indian rather undisguisedly, he 'whistled me down the wind' as a good-for-nothing green-horn.

It would be presumption in me to pronounce upon the morality or immorality of the modern stage; neither is it a question germane to this narrative. But its effects upon myself I may be warranted in avowing. I can conscientiously declare, that at the period when the entire mind was rivetted to the business of the scene, it was untenanted by a single debasing impulse. If pollution there were, I escaped its taint. The result was indeed essentially the reverse. Mischievous perhaps, but chiefly so because it floated the spirit into a world of

dreams, robed it in the rainbow garniture of poetry, caused it to look down in complacent scorn on society and its claims, and though guiltless of leading to absolute misdeeds, operated as the source of numberless sins of omission. In all this, however, the drama was but the vassal of a peculiar organization.

When leaving home, my father had negatived an application for a watch, and some airy articles of apparel. These I had taken the liberty of purchasing in Glasgow. The outlay, added to theatrical and domestic expenses, exhausted, in three months, the allowance of six. Most unwillingly, I wrote for a further supply. So negligent had been my correspondence, that this was only the second letter transmitted to Thorncroft. Though always averse to epistolary labor, I was not actuated solely by caprice or indolence in the breach of a paramount duty. I never spontaneously sought shelter under subterfuge or falsehood; and, without resorting to disingenuousness, it was impossible to furnish a gratifying representation of my college life.

A remittance was forwarded, which, carefully husbanded, might have been eked out into a sufficiency for imperative demands; but amusement was essential: and for both it was

inadequate. The play was still 'the thing.' I was seriously inclined to qualify for the boards; and to the expenditure in tickets added the purchase of a collection of dramas. Letters from home threw a momentary damp on this enthusiasm. My father accompanied the remittance by the observation, that he was obliged to pay dearly for the favor of hearing from me, and that to such communications he would, in future, return the answer they deserved. Aunt Rebecca mildly remonstrated against extravagance—praised Jonathan Penrose's economy—reprobated the enticements of the city—and implored me, as I valued her love, the esteem of the good, and my own temporal and eternal welfare, to 'remember my Creator in the days of my youth.'

To the unenlightened idolater of theatricals, introduction to an actor, admission behind the scenes, or to the green-room, is as much an object of ambition as is to the courtly aspirant the permission to salute the palm of royalty. Yearning after an initiation into Thespian mysteries, I gladly embraced the opportunity of becoming acquainted with Mr Montague, the performer whose personation of Shakespeare's Triumvir had wakened my loudest plaudits. A fellow student was invited to dine

at his lodgings on the eve of his benefit, and had obtained the privilege of bringing a friend.

The address led us to the attic of an ancient building in a filthy lane, reminding one of Bobadil's *sub sigillo* quarters with Cobb, the waterman. Tapping at the door, a pannel was withdrawn, and a face, which my companion whispered was Mrs Montague's, reconnoitered us through a wire grating. Instant ingress was vouchsafed, and greeting given in a strain of high-flown compliment. The appearance of the premises, and the inmates, inflicted a shock something similar to that, which he endures, who, just about to seat himself in a friendly circle, is left sprawling on the carpet by the ill-mannered sleight of a practical jester.

A recess of the only room was occupied by a bed, on which was huddled an extraordinary medley of tawdry habiliments—turbans, tinsel-tunics, russet boots, gaudy plumes, leathern gauntlets, and artificial flowers. Swords, daggers, a broken mirror, play-bills, milk-bills, and a black bottle that had enacted the part of a candlestick on the preceding night, surmounted the mantel-piece. The deray of the dinner-table conformed to the general chaos. The cloth was dappled in the most unprepossessing manner; the superficies of the plates

was intersected by knife-lines; the work of stubborn hands; the salt seemed to have been wedded to the pepper; and a hideous little brown mustard-pot was laced with golden streaks in so satisfactory a way as of itself to allay the cravings of appetite—independent of the suspicious dish of tripe, which constituted the pillar of the entertainment.

Mr Montague's 'sable-silvered' locks betokened some eight-and-forty summers. His altitude was still imposing, although the dignity of the buskin was merged in a pair of shrivelled slippers that had once been red. A nascent protuberance at the inferior section of a vest of flowered satin, then in its 'sere and yellow leaf,' indicated that the epoch of 'heavy tragedy' had set in. There were roses on his cheeks, and on his nose also—not the wholesome produce of the soil, but redundant exotics, stimulated into luxuriance by the constant irrigation of strong waters. His upper garment was a flaming calico dressing-gown, a relic of light-comedy days; his nether, a pair of faded Nankin trousers, which fitted themselves to his shape uncomfortably well, and descended no farther than to the calf of his leg.

Mrs Montague was her husband's counterpart, bating the quality of height, which was

condensed into breadth. Her figure was to him in the ratio of a quarto to a folio. She wore a skirt of pea-green silk, a blue cotton velvet boddice, a yellow neckerchief, and a crimson crape turban, with cock's feathers. I perceived, notwithstanding the shade of a cluster of ringlets, that she had a glass eye.

Complaisance induced me to simulate a relish for the slovenly banquet, the termination of which afforded real relief. The black bottle, having undergone a show of purification from the pollution of tallow, had been dispatched to a neighboring publican's, and was placed before us replete with the amber spirit of the West Indies. A respectable drinking equipage was paraded, a bowl of punch manufactured, and our host, having pledged us in a bumper, smacked his lips with a luscious smile, and exhorted us to do justice to good liquor. Mrs Montague, nothing loath, swilled her quota. I had no propensity to tippling, but was pressed so warmly to be a Roman in Rome, that I discarded accustomed abstinence, lest it should be construed into disdain of well-meant hospitality.

We waxed convivial, and the drama became the topic of animated discussion. Mr Montague told us, in confidence, that all the living ac-

tors who had attained fame and fortune, were mere newspaper puppets puffed into celebrity, though ignorant of the first principles of their art. There was a school, he said, almost extinct, disciplined on a different system. Of that school he believed he was the last surviving member. Yet his merits were so poorly appreciated by a miserable manager, that 'every puny whipster' was thrust into his crack characters.

Here I begged to dissent from him, having witnessed his inimitable performance of Mark Antony.

'Mark Antony, avaunt!' he exclaimed,—'a part for a stick! Frederick Augustus Montague plays genteel comedy, or nothing. Look at this, my friends,' he continued, exhibiting a play-bill, 'a treat for your critical faculties! Monday evening—my benefit—the elegant comedy of the Belles' Stratagem; the part of Doricourt by Mr Montague!

'And now, good friends,
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiery,
Give me one poor request.'

'What is't my lord?
We will—'

I answered, proud of knowing the text.

‘Muster strong for my night; I shall make a *hit*, and you will acknowledge it. Do me the honor to distribute these admissions—box and pit—in each parcel five pounds’ worth. I must ‘to horse.’ I am down for Friar Lawrence, and ‘my hour is almost come.’

‘Perhaps,’ said I, ‘you would introduce us behind the scenes.’

He placed a finger on his forehead, and pondering for a minute, observed there was a difficulty a trifling difficulty. The manager was jealous of intrusion; but a bottle of wine would smooth his crest, had he wherewithal to purchase it. Benefitpreparations had unfortunately emptied his exchequer.

I drew forth a purse, containing my late remittance, and submitted the price of two box tickets; my companion did the same.

‘The truth is, gentlemen,’ said Mr Montague, ‘I owe the curmudgeon manager a few pounds, and until I am down with the dust, I can take no liberties. Perhaps, Sir,’ addressing himself to me, ‘you could spare me five pounds?—just the amount of the tickets you have kindly accepted on commission. We can settle after my benefit.’

My financial strength was betrayed, and

there remained no alternative but to surrender with a good grace. The money was advanced, and we were admitted into the working department of the theatre under the countenance of our host.

I was equally disappointed by the dramatic *arcana* as by the representative of Mark Antony stripped of the *prætexta*. The powers by which mutations, apparently magical, had been effected, were, I found, grooves, trap-doors, pulleys, and sottish carpenters. The painting and gilding degenerated into the coarse decorations of a sign post; the air of the whole was dismally dreary. Even the vaunted green-room was but a pitiful affair. Juliet, a blowsy dame, past her meridian, stood rearward to a spectral fire, taking sarcastic cognizance of a bandy-legged Romeo, who was darning a rent in one of his white silk stockings.

Passing a dressing-room sacred to the young ladies of the establishment, the door of which was ajar, I espied a damsel tricked out as winged Cupid, practising the postures of a dance. It was the Signora Seraphina, a fascinating creature, announced as from the opera at Paris. She was really pretty in spite of paint. I peeped at her until her approach to the door obliged me to ensconce myself behind a waterfall.

‘ Mrs Jenkins!’ cried the Signora, in a tone bordering on a scream, ‘ Mrs Jenkins!’

‘ Here, Miss,’ answered an ancient matron, the attendant general of the actresses.

‘ Have you brought the beer, Jenkins?’

‘ Yes, Miss.’

‘ Then go for another pot, and tell Mrs Mac Fadyen to score it to me.’

‘ Mrs Mac Fadyen says she’ll score no more for the ladies,’ replied Mrs Jenkins.

‘ Well, pay it yourself, like a good soul,’ rejoined the coaxing Seraphina.

‘ As I live, Miss, I hav’n’t a farthing!’

‘ Then we must do without, that’s all,’ said the light-footed Cupid, pettishly fluttering its pinions, and retreating into the sanctuary, followed by the bearer of the unethereal beverage. This scene was enough. I slunk to the quiet of the midnight bed, sated with enlightenment.

Mr Montague’s benefit passed, undistinguished by any description of ‘ hit.’ His tickets remained upon my hands; and the state of the treasury impelled me to the disagreeable task of seeking a settlement. This, however, was not to be accomplished. The heavy tragedian had rendered himself invisible. Repeated calls at the theatre and his lodgings

were made in vain; at last I ascertained that he had joined a company at Carlisle.

The session of college was hastening to a close; sundry accounts had accumulated and where to look for the means of defraying them was a serious and an urgent question. Mrs Campbell talked of weighty rent and taxes, and the importance of punctuality; Jonathan was provokingly caustic; young men, to whom I had been liberal in their season of extremity, were either shy of collision, dull in comprehension, or as needy as myself. Application at home was utterly desperate. As the last resource, I decided on appealing to Mr Dalrymple, hoping to prevail upon my aunt to compensate him for any aid he might supply.

In the high tide of play-going, I held the chief of the Glasgow trades and his sober dwelling to be 'weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable,'—and had accordingly turned my back upon them; what was worse I had entirely vacated my seat in the church. On the latter point, there was a certainty of meeting a rigid inquisition; and some form of apology was necessary to secure my request a favorable hearing. I constructed a feasible fiction; and was reduced to so low a pitch, by the consequences of folly, that, although even from pride abhorring

a deliberate falsehood, yet I did *not* hesitate to give currency to one under circumstances which imparted to it a two fold criminality.

I related to the Deacon-Convener a circumlocutionary story of extra expenses, the tediousness of transmitting cash from Devon, and the ardent desire I had to proceed thither immediately. He shook his head rather skeptically at the introduction of the petition, but the earnestness with which it was spoken eventually brought conviction. He clapped me encouragingly on the back, and consented to disburse the 'siller.'

'But whaur hae ye been this twal' month, that ye did na gi'e us a ca'?' he said.

'My studies, Sir!'

'Ay, ay! that's a' verra weel; but I hae anither craw to pluck wi' ye!—What keepit ye frae the kirk? Ye were na at your studies on the Sawbath!'

'I attended other churches, Sir, though not at yours.'

'D'ye ken their names?'

'There was St John's—the Tron—the College'—

'Ay, ay! 'here a little, and there a little;' but no muckle 'for instruction!' But we canna expeck an auld head on young shouth-

ers. I understaun ye'r feyther's a worthy man, an' I hope ye'll be a credit to his gray hairs. Gie' my respects to Mr Thorpe and him, and tell them, if iver they come to Glaskie, they'll aye fin' a reekin' sheep's heed in Gibbieslawn.'

The money thus unworthily obtained from the honest magistrate, felt as it would weigh me to the earth; but there was a quick disposal of the accusing encumbrance. To discharge a remnant of debt, I was obliged to part with my watch for a fifth of its original price. When the whole was liquidated, the travelling stock was deplorably diminished. On the deck of a cranky Bristol trader, beset by all the hardships and impurities of coast navigation, my course was steered for England, sick of the surge—sick of the theatre—and sick, very sick, of myself.

CHAPTER VII.

No marvel that poets have chosen Home, and the Native Land, as grateful themes of song. In themselves, the words are full of melody; in their associations they form exquisite music.

It is a blessed thing to have a haven of rest where Love lights its beacon and keeps its vigils to greet the returning wanderer, weary of a cheerless pilgrimage by flood or field. God help those for whom every country wears a foreign aspect—who avert their steps from the dwelling of their fathers, banished by the clouds of discord, or the rank weeds of desolation !

Pleasant to me, as the face of an early friend, were the broken shores of Pembroke, and the bay of St Brïde's. The vessel touched at Ilfracombe, where my luggage was consigned to the care of Jonathan, who was to make a short stay there with a relation: as it was but two days' journey to Thorncroft, I proceeded direct, and on foot. Spring was in its prime. The morn I started was as rosy as the matin flush of midsummer; the virgin

breath of the meadows and gardens, through which the road meandered, gave lightness to the bosom, elasticity to the footstep. The vine-branches were shooting forth their infant foliage, and orchard after orchard, ever and anon, enriched the breeze with a tide of fragrance, inspiring, in the fervor of noon-day, a voluptuous languor. Gladsome to the eye that expatiates on nature is the maternal beauty of the blossoming apple-tree: surpassingly gladsome was it to me, just landed from the waters, in the county of my birth, where I had, from childhood, been encircled by its peaceful glories.

The hues of sunset were glowingly inter-streaked, varying from the warmest crimson to the tenderest green, and in their wavy irradiations imparted to the western sky the fanciful resemblance of a superb ocean-shell. Tired of travel, I came in sight of the rustic chapel where I used to go up, with our house, to worship. My feet were blistered, my shoes arid with dust. I turned into the cool, grassy burying-ground, to calm the flutter of my spirits, to rest my limbs, and to refresh my soiled apparel, lest a chance encounter with an acquaintance should betray my pedestrian return.

The chapel had been whitewashed and repainted, and, peering through its shade of larch and yew, presented a soothing emblem of Christian tranquillity. Time, place, and circumstance, were masters of my mood. I did not wish to dispel the religious awe that solemnized the soul; and from a resistless reverence for those who slept beneath, I refrained from profaning the luxuriant herbage by the taint of the highway. I passed to the lonely spot where, apart from the rest, beneath a weeping willow was my mother's grave. The shrubs which surrounded it were flourishing—no unseemly weed had permission to vegetate there—the birds nestled in the branches of the overshadowing tree, as secure of protection near the remains of her who was meek and merciful to all the creatures of God. The moss-covered headstone had been displaced by one of recent construction. In addition to the simple consecration to the memory of the departed, it bore the inscription of 'Blessed are they who die in the Lord.' I bared my brow—pressed my lip and cheek to the name of my parent, cut in the cold slab—and prayed that her dove-like spirit might resume its ascendancy over him whom, like her, I loved, but whom, unlike her, I dreaded.

Twilight had thickened into dusk, when I stood beneath the porch where, in by-gone times, my hand had assisted the graceful windings of the honeysuckle, in its endeavors to peep through the lattice. The deep voice of my father at family devotion floated on the stillness of eventide. It was his customary prelude to repose. Deeming it better to defer entering until he was a-bed, I retreated, on tiptoe, to an adjacent arbor. I soon marked the glimmering of light in his chamber, and the reflection of his figure on the curtain, as he passed and repassed the window. I waited for some minutes after the room was in darkness, then gliding to the rear of the house, effected a noiseless entrance.

My aunt and our old female servant were seated by the kitchen fire, and my sudden appearance startled them as if they had seen a ghost. They overwhelmed me with congratulations—my favorite fare was produced—and the easy chair, rolled from its usual position, supported a tingling frame, while I enjoyed the delicious application of the foot-bath. My aunt could scarcely be withheld from arousing my father: she said he would be displeased if he were not apprised of my arrival. I plead-

ed fatigue and disposition to sleep. Having eaten a more satisfactory meal than my funds had enabled me to provide during the previous fortnight, I stole to the crisp and snowy sheets, where sensation afforded grateful assurance of the intimate connexion between bodily labor and bodily enjoyment.

Unconscious how long I had slumbered, I was awakened by a noise in the apartment. A light flashed upon my face and, shrinking beneath the coverlet, I looked forth with timid and half-shut eyes. I saw my father bending over my clothes, and examining the trousers, shirt, and hose, sorely blemished by the stains of travel. Searching my pockets, he laid bare the nakedness of the purse, which contained but three solitary half-pence. He then advanced towards the bed, while I feigned to be sound asleep—measured with a light finger the pulsation of my temples—wrapped me up carefully from top to toe, and silently withdrew.

Our meeting next day exhibited few external evidences of cordiality. I was chidden on account of the money squandered in Glasgow, and for the mode in which I had come back, which, he said, occasioned by improvidence, would be attributed to his sordid parsimony. Seeing me sadly depressed, my aunt interposed

in my behalf, with a degree of fervor that involved her in no small portion of the reprehension. I observed, despondingly, when my father left us together,—‘Better I were dead than to bear eternal reproaches!’

‘Do not be foolish, Robert,’ she replied, ‘it is all intended for your good; and kinder is a parent’s frown than a stranger’s flattery.’

Until the loan from Mr Dalrymple were paid, I found myself incapable of experiencing a moment’s ease. The fear that he might write on the subject to Thorncroft made me miserable. Were it known, I expected little short of being turned out of doors; for, to ‘owe no man any thing,’ had been too strictly the governing precept in our household, to authorize a hope of leniency towards an obligation contracted as mine had been. To win my aunt over to discharge the debt, my actions were moulded as closely as possible to her wishes. I conned her favorite works—rose an hour earlier—and, as the most palatable employment, volunteered assisting Mr Penrose during the six months’ collegiate recess.

At a period when she was in extreme good humor, I preferred the momentous request, stating, without descending to particulars, that I had borrowed the money from a gentleman

of Glasgow. A cloud fell upon her countenance; in a tone of bitter upbraiding, she censured my prodigality—inveighed against my theatrical frenzy, with which, for the first time, I discovered she was familiar—and warned me that if the grace of God did not bless me with humility, shame and ruin must be my portion. I was so confounded, that I could not unbar my lips to attempt extenuation; nor had I the opportunity, for she quitted me abruptly, with the advice to pay college debts out of college savings. When she was gone, I could not help asking myself if I were under the dark illusion of a dream,—the reality was but too manifest.

It came—months had intervened—but at last it came—the letter from Mr Dalrymple, addressed ostensibly to Mr Thorpe, who conceived himself bound to submit it to him who was most interested in its contents. Going home to dinner, I saw my father pacing in front of the house, as he ever did when unpleasantly agitated.

‘Robert!’ he said, as I opened the gate.

‘Sir!’

‘Follow me, Robert.’

He led the way into the parlor, where the servant was adjusting the table-cloth. He bade her call his sister, and remain in the kitchen,—his commands were obeyed.

‘Sit down, Rebecca,’ he said, ‘till your darling reads this letter.’

He handed me the document. I observed that it was dated from Glasgow. A cold dew burst from my forehead: my tongue refused its office.

‘Did I not bid you read, Sir?’ violently exclaimed my father.

‘Yes, yes, Sir, I shall read,’ I faltered.

‘Have patience, Richard; he’ll read if you give him time,’ said my aunt.

And so, indeed, I did, from beginning to end of that, to me, interminable paper, which though graciously worded, contained facts sufficiently heavy to give me the air of a criminal enunciating his death-warrant.

‘That paragraph again!’ cried my father, pointing to a particular section.

—‘As you expressed a wish that I should counsel the lad upon attending Gospel ordinances, I offered him a sitting in our Kirk, where he appeared regularly enough for two months, but afterwards, as he told me, he frequented other places of worship. At the close of the session, he came in great distress for the loan of fifteen pounds, on the score of extra expenses, and the difficulty of getting supplies from home; and on your account, as well as on his

father's, according to your character of him, I gave him the money—'

'What were the extra expenses, Sir?—and why have I never heard of this before?' demanded my father.

'For any sake, speak lower, brother,' said my aunt;—'do not expose our affairs to the servants.'

'Expose!—How can we be worse exposed than we have been by an idle, ungrateful, godless spendthrift, leading the life of a heathen in a strange country, and raising money under false and beggarly pretences? Expose! A viper pledging my name in Scotland to support his profligate excesses, scattering the hard-won earnings of my life like chaff, in carousing with his Rodneys!—Give him his will, and what cares he if I have not a house to cover me? This comes of my toiling for him like a galley slave—of getting him expensive teachers—of sending him to the first rate schools—of striving to place him above want and above labor. Look at the scorn that's perched upon his brow!—Young man—young man—your pride will bring its own scourge, or else I'm much mistaken.'

'I always thought he was sent abroad too soon,' said my aunt. 'He should be kept at

home till he knows the value of money; and till, through the Divine aid, he learns to see 'the beauty of holiness.' What's done can't be undone! As a respectable man's concerned, let him be paid; and this sacrifice to folly will doubtless be the last.'

'How know you that? May I not to-morrow receive the same kind of favor from another quarter? One trick would be too little for so accomplished a deceiver; but, with God's blessing, I shall alter my plan. I'll show him that he is not yet a fine gentleman. You shall have a smock frock, Sir, to cover your vanity. The farm shall be your college, and a spade shall be your book. I will no longer distract myself throwing pearls before swine—forcing a profession on a reprobate. I tell you, Sir, I will not!'

I unseasonably answered that I had no wish for the profession in question; which, being erroneously interpreted as a meditated expression of contemptuousness, inflamed my father's passion to the highest pitch. He threw the unlucky letter in my face, and in the vehemence of the action, unintentionally I am persuaded, inflicted a blow that brought the blood from my mouth.

'O, this is too much, Richard! Leave the room, child,' said my aunt.

His heart had smitten him more deeply than her words; yet self-reproach, as is generally the case with warm tempered persons, aggravated, instead of allaying his wrath. He endeavored to clutch me as I bolted from his presence, but I eluded his grasp, and, flying from the house, ran at the top of my speed, until I reached a clump of trees about half a mile distant.

I remained in this concealment until night-fall, in a state of mind, turbulent as a whirlpool. From my departure for college, I conceived myself entitled to the privileges of manhood; and I writhed under the blow as an unjustifiable degradation. The terms applied to my conduct appeared arbitrarily exaggerated. I began to think that my father had a greater love for money than for me; and being an only son this seemed the less excusable, as I would be a certain sufferer by an impaired inheritance. I brooded over a thousand plans for evidencing the resolve not to be conquered by ill treatment. These, like the impressions which gave rise to them, were uniformly wrong.

I slept in a laborer's cottage, and for three days obstinately kept aloof from home. My aunt, apprised of my retreat, furnished the people with food for my use, under promise of

secrecy. At length she came to the cottage, and induced me to accompany her back. Matters flowed in their accustomed course, except that for several weeks I was debarred from sitting at table, or holding any communication, with my father.

Jonathan Penrose was, as formerly, my shopmate at his uncle's, and shared the dislike of a young apprentice as well as mine. He was a favorite at our house, and I attributed his elevation there to his diligence in playing the spy upon me. I owed him a grudge for administering *nux vomica* to a pet sparrow hawk that flew at his glasses, and ingenuity was taxed in devising reprisals.

He was short-sighted—fond of gymnastic exercises, and an indefatigable entomologist. Eden, without insects, would have been to him a wilderness. His tongue never flagged in describing the phenomena of *Coleoptera*—*Dermaptera*—*Orthoptera*—*Omoptera*—*Hemiptera*—*Lepidoptera*—*Dictyoptera*—and the various minute tribes of winged or creeping things with mystical names. A study, in itself excellent for unfolding the admirable completeness of Nature throughout her whole machinery, exhibited in him the character of *monomania*. He became actually sick, in consequence of the thought-

lessness of a housmaid who, in her zeal for cleanliness, flung a box of the order *Anophura* into the fire, under the unscientific appellation of 'odious vermin.'

There was a tree overhanging a muddy pond in the rear of Mr Penrose's premises, from a branch of which, Jonathan frequently suspended himself by the hands, for the purpose of strengthening his arms. The end of this branch extended above the deepest part of the pool. In conjunction with George, the apprentice, I sawed it about three fourths through, and filled up the cut in a way that made it imperceptible to a casual observer. Appropriating one of Jonathan's largest and rarest preserved flies, I secured it as naturally as I could, to a twig at the termination of the deceptive portion of the branch.

The unsuspecting object of the plot came forth, as usual, to practise his muscular evolutions. George and I were standing by the tree as he approached, and I, pointing towards the decoy, exclaimed, as if to my companion alone, 'What a beautiful insect!'

'Where—where?' cried Jonathan, joining us with rapid strides.

'On that twig,' said George.

The impetuous entomologist made one of his

gymnastic springs towards the branch, and catching the extremity, it yielded instantaneously to his weight, and down he soused in the bed of turbid waters.

The plunge was more serious than we had calculated; and had not Jonathan been an expert swimmer, he might have sustained greater mischief than a momentary investiture with 'the green mantle of the standing pool.' He emerged in a woful plight, and without a word of comment, went in quest of his uncle, to whom he accused me as the author of the diabolical contrivance, enumerating a long list of grievances, and declaring that either he or I must seek occupation elsewhere. Mr Penrose instituted a formal inquiry into the affair. George, by intimidation, was converted into an approver, and the charge having been substantiated, I was sent to rusticate entirely at Thorncroft.

My father partially fulfilled his threat of adopting a new system. He interdicted the return to college, until I should prove myself worthy of the privilege. This was no privation, aware, as I was, that pecuniary supplies would be exceedingly restricted. I repined, however, at being shorn of indulgences, which use had made indispensable to comfort. I

was obliged to wear the plain attire of a working farmer's son—to walk to sermon instead of riding—to rise at six o'clock—to assist at fairs—and, what I considered harder and more humiliating still, to collect the shop debts. A small weekly stipend granted during the term of employment with Mr Penrose, was withdrawn.

There resided at E—— a half-pay subaltern, of a colonial corps, named Radcliffe. He was one of our customers for broadcloth, and his memory, untenacious of accounts, required an occasional reminiscence. This I was commissioned to bestow upon him, periodically, and it was done with extreme repugnance. Of the office imposed upon me I was in every respect ashamed; but to be impertinently importunate with a gentleman soldier about paltry pounds, shillings, and pence, seemed an outrageous violation of social decorum.

When taking a cool retrospect of Radcliffe's character, stripped of its military tinsel, and comparing it with the abstract notion of a responsible moral and intellectual being, I am half inclined to rank it as the coinage of a distempered brain. Yet such men are abundantly common, especially in the army, where, to balance the cravings of the body, the mind often phi-

losophically subsists on the smallest modicum of ideas.

He thought in scarlet; deprive him of his draughts upon the service, and, beyond the routine phrases of the table or of salutation, he was a complete bankrupt in expression. A sailor, thirty years entangled in the coil of cable, could not have been more wedded to the technicalities of seamanship, than was he to those of a profession of which he had seen little, and learned less.

His whole stock of colloquial entertainment comprised exactly six anecdotes, if such they could be termed; these he repeated night after night, and hour after hour, forgetful that he had ever broached them before. Any remark, however remote, operated as a remembrancer; and he invariably made the preliminary asseveration, that he was just put in mind of 'as good a thing as was ever sported by officer, noncommissioned officer or private.' The comicality of his 'good things' rested solely in the total absence of point, humor, or importance. Those who had listened to them until letter-perfect in the details, made merry at the parturient mountain, while the uninitiated, though perplexed by the abortive result, joined in the general roar, lest their neighbors should triumph in superior acuteness.

I could relate each of his stories word for word:—evanescent, as writing upon water, have been many of the lessons of wisdom; absurdity, even when the zest for it has fled, clings to the recollection. There were ‘the major and the monkey’—‘the admiral’s dinner’—‘the devil’s delights’—‘astonishing the natives’—‘calling the roster’—and ‘sangaree.’ The eccentric profanities, with which they were thickly studded, prevents me from furnishing a specimen of these nugatory narations.

Radcliffe was sufficiently a veteran in the partisan warfare between debtor and creditor, to perceive that I was pressed into a service hostile to my will. To foster so promising a disposition, he adopted towards me the bluff urbanity of the camp; he invited me to what he styled a slice of ‘the king’s own;’ insisted on my ‘bolting a caulker;’ and regaled me with his sextuple jesting-fund, negro songs, and the glories of the last occasion on which he ‘got as blind as an owl.’ This roystering jollity had the charm of novelty; its grossness was sublimated by the fiery spirit of battle which appeared to animate its votary; and, contrasted with the precision and regularity of Thorncroft, presented itself in the attractive guise of manly freedom.

My former longing after a sash and sword revived, and met with ample encouragement from Radcliffe, who said that I was cut out for a soldier. Having learning and *nous*, he was sure I should soon obtain a staff appointment; and it would be a 'shame to bind a fine young fellow down to be squirt-master of an hospital.' He recommended, if 'old sly' refused to 'post the bit' for a commission, to make myself 'scarce,' and be off to the Peninsula with the first reinforcement. There I might make my own terms with 'the ancient,' or fight my way to an ensigncy.

'By the jumps, Bob! many an able commander has shouldered a brown Bess. There was Major-general Pepperpot—old Cayenne, as we used to call him—curse me, but that puts me in mind of one of the best things ever sported by officer, non-commissioned officer, or private—I christened it 'Astonishing the Natives—'

It is pleasanter to imagine than to be told what followed this threadbare exordium.

CHAPTER VIII.

Our house was divided against itself. Parental apprehension exaggerated and multiplied my backslidings. Taxed with offences I had never dreamt of committing, I haughtily appeased a wounded spirit by relieving these allegations of their groundlessness. It was Romance, not Sensuality, that had seduced me; and I have labored under the worst imputations of evil companionship, when stretched among the long grass beneath the beechen hedge in the meadow, unconscious of Time's footfall, I consumed the day in wantoning with summer, in cherishing the sense of existence, in tingeing the world with hues of a radiance unparalleled by the beauteous bow of heaven.

My father went on a business tour through the manufacturing towns of Yorkshire, proposing to take London in his route. He contemplated an absence of a month. His authority was devolved upon my aunt, to whom I was to be a sort of *aid-de-camp*. I counted the minutes until the period of his departure, and when he was fairly on the way, my heart seemed releas-

ed from a load, and I felt as if I had suddenly grown an inch or two taller.

I was superintending the repair of a field gate, when, turning round at the sound of a horse-tramp, I recognized Frank Rodney. Dressed in the coarsest garb, I would gladly have sought concealment behind the hedge, but his keen eye had distinguished me, and in a second he dismounted and grasped my hand.

‘So you’ve thrown ‘physic to the dogs,’ Robert, and become gentleman farmer.’

‘I hate them both,’ I answered; ‘but when kings command, subjects must obey.’

‘O, I see how the land lies! Well, if you will not be tied to cathartics or clodhopping, follow my example, and serve the king in earnest. I have said *valeté* to the dozy divines of Oxford, and am about to get in readiness to join a regiment.’

‘Indeed!’

‘Yes; and you’ll spend a week at St Aymers, and I shall explain all my motions since I saw you on the day of your fox-hunt to the present hour. I wish to know if our old scheme of being camp-comrades can’t be realized. Should papa still resent your broken head, blindfold him as neatly as you can, and be with us to-morrow.’

‘ My father has left home for a month; my aunt’s permission I am sure will not be granted.’

‘ Pshaw! elderly ladies are very forgiving. Take leave first, and ask permission afterwards.’

‘ Well, perhaps I may join you tomorrow, or next day; but I won’t promise.’

‘ You ’ll perform, however, which is quite as good. Remember, I shall positively expect you. There are stirring news afloat, my boy! More when we meet again.’

Apologizing for his abruptness, he galloped off. I peevishly reprimanded the carpenter for gaping after him and shouting his praises, instead of patching the broken gate. Out of humor with everything, I could see no equity in the distribution of the gifts of fortune, nor could understand why one was born to affluence and honor, while another, his equal or superior in the qualities that dignify humanity, was doomed to the mortifications of a lowly lot, embittered by an exquisite perception of his miseries.

I vacillated about going to St Aymers, marshalling on one side my aunt’s displeasure, and a plebeian wardrobe; on the other friendship, amusement, and Ellen Rodney. The latter predominated. Borrowing a brooch and a dashing vest from an acquaintance, I was stir-

ring at the first flutter of the lark; and, leaving a written excuse, took the road with mingled gaiety and compunction.

I met Miss Rodney in the neighborhood of the mansion. From the date of the former visit, I had only seen her by glimpses on horseback, or in a carriage; but she still reigned queen of my aerial palaces. She was returning from a morning walk, wearing an undress of snowy purity, and looking like a rose whose petals are just unfolding—a red rose among the white. There was a nameless charm in her gipsy hat, her pretty parasol, the demure frill that circled her throat; her glove might have paired with Cinderella's slipper, and had the age of chivalry been restored, it would have been my gage against the world.

Frank, she said, would be elated at my arrival; the rest of the family I should find full of sorrow, produced by his headstrong determination to enter the army in the heat of the war. To preclude his taking any rash step, his father had consented to procure him a commission, though his education was incomplete. The regiment to which he was appointed had been ordered on foreign service, and their only solace in the melancholy prospect of such a separation, was that its com-

mander was one of Mr Rodney's earliest friends.

The young officer had commenced his military training under the inspection of a recruiting-serjeant. He was at drill in front of the house, and, on perceiving our approach, lowered his musket, and advanced to the charge. Ellen smilingly repelled him with her parasol, and he, bending on his knee, loudly implored quarter.

During my stay, I shared in his exercises, and heard the particulars of his university history, with the skill he employed in breaking his fetters. For some, he admitted, Oxford might have pleasures, but they were foreign to his taste. He was sick of its Greek, its proctors, its cloisters, its common-rooms, double X, and dulness. A snail appeared to him as useful a member of society as a lumbering professor; the condition of the most renowned man of letters, a species of martyrdom. While they pored over their libraries, the flower of life was withering; for them existence showered its sweets in vain; and the passing odor of fame was a sorry compensation for dreary years of self-denial. Mind and body, he thought, should take the field together; the ancients advocated this doctrine; Socrates, though a philosopher, was a stubborn 'customer in a set-to;' and the Olympic Games were open to the

whole family of genius—bard and boxer—historian and whip.

Mr and Mrs Rodney dined abroad the last day on which I tasted the hospitality of St Aymers. Frank and his sister held a festival of their own; when the latter retired, we dressed ourselves in suits of the ensign's new uniform, reciprocated compliments, put on magnanimous airs before a mirror, poised our wine-glasses in the style of accomplished soakers, and drained their contents in pledging all the British generals whose names occurred to our remembrance.

‘And so, Earnshaw,’ said he, ‘you think the old gentleman won’t stand a pair of colors?’

‘I’m convinced he would rather follow me to the church-yard: he would as soon make me an executioner as a soldier. Victory he misnames chance; war, murder masquerading in robes of state.’

‘What says he to David, the ‘man after God’s own heart?’’

‘That he lived under the Old Testament dispensation, ere the Sun of Righteousness had arisen with healing under his wings. Besides, the declaration of David himself, ‘The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great

wars: thou shalt not build a house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight.' '

'Why, Bob, you quote Scripture like a parson; but, preach who may, wars there were, and wars there will be—

'Till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart!'

I have heard of 'thanksgiving in churches for the success of the national arms. Your father's a Puritan, and drinks verjuice.'

'I'm no Puritan, Rodney, and you must spare my father. Age has weaknesses, and youth should respect them.'

'Well spoken, Solon!—you'd be a proper light-company man.'

'Do you think so?'

'Ten stone, and five feet eight.'

'Five feet nine, by Lieutenant Radcliffe's measurement.'

'I wish I saw you a captain.'

'I wish you did—but it's a long way from the ranks.'

'Hang the ranks!'

'A coarse jacket has covered many a gallant heart.'

‘ True, and the more shame for the commissariat. Earnshaw, place your fives upon your breast, and answer one question—Do you really and truly desire to see service?’

‘ Do I hope to look upon tomorrow’s sun?’

‘ Then listen to me. I proceed to the depot in the Isle of Wight. The colonel of the regiment is a friend of our family. My father allows me four hundred a year. Cut manure and medicine—join our corps as a gentleman volunteer! Command my influence—and be my comrade in fortress and field.’

‘ You’re a generous fellow, Rodney.’

‘ Nonsense!—I consult my own enjoyment. Yes, or no?’

‘ I should like to accept your offer, but—’

‘ You dread the obligation. Come, come—don’t be nice about nothing. For resolute spirits the skies of the Peninsula rain commissions; and when you awaken some fine morning with an epaulette on your shoulder, why we can talk of a bill for ‘meat, drink, washing, and lodging.’ There are glorious opportunities now—Wellington has done wonders—Junot beaten at Vimeiro—Victor at Talaveyra—Massena at Busaco. I almost fear the sport will be over before I’m on the ground—but Napoleon’s staunch. Your decision, old chum!—a blade of blue steel, or a gold-headed cane?’

‘My hand; Rodney—I am yours!’

‘Bravo!—here’s to the young volunteer! I shall write when all’s ripe and ready; until then you must sleep under arms. You can keep alive the generous ardor in dreaming of the dark-eyed Lusitanian maids. Spain and Portugal are the countries for a cavalier—veils, balconies, orange groves, guitars, convents, and—bull-fights.’

‘They are lovely lands; poetry breathes even in the names of their provinces, cities, streams, and mountains. I have often journeyed in thought among the wastes of the Sierra Morena, and wooed the ‘sweet south’ on the banks of the Tajo, the Guadiana, and the Guadalquivir.’

‘And to these lands we go as deliverers—as the allies of a brave people, maintaining the death-wrestle of freedom against a gigantic foe. A bumper to the cause! Can you sing?’

‘No more than a raven; but music makes me happy.’

‘Every soldier should sing; I’ll try myself.’

In vain, in vain, young beauty weeping,

Woo us in her bower to stay;

While her dewy lids are sleeping

We’ll to horse, away—away!

Joy there’s none, my lads, like reaping

Glory in the battle fray!

With a proud flag waving o'er us,
With a good blade in each hand,
Thinking on the soil that bore us—
On our own unconquered land—
Friends behind, the foe before us,
Who our onset shall withstand!"

A servant presented Miss Rodney's compliments, and announced that tea awaited us in the hermitage on the mount. Frank was for cracking another bottle, but I had not acquired the habit of dethroning reason, and secret inducements inclined me to prefer the lady's invitation.

The hermitage stood upon an artificial eminence raised on an adjoining slope; it was sheltered in the rear by a magnificent oak, whose branches overhung the roof. Shrubs and flowers were sprinkled around, as if sown by the winds. The view from the quaint door-way was confined to a tangled glade, where a sparkling rill played piningly around the ivied walls of a ruined chapel, till lost in a dense mass of forest trees shutting out the world and its frivolities. The autumnal sunset, shedding its rose hues through Gothic lattices, mantled the beautiful bust of the maiden, who, presiding among elegant China vases,

piled fruit, and clustered flowers, might have sat for one of the unearthly beauties represented by painters in their 'temptations,' of legendary saints.

The attraction of a colt, an undoubted descendant of the famous Eclipse, deprived us of Frank's society, and of the notes of his flute, which was at hand with his sister's harp. The latter was touched by the fairy fingers of its mistress, whose sweet voice accompanied it well. Having run over the melodies beloved of yore, she proposed singing the last she had acquired, assured that it would please me. 'It is a Spanish ballad,' she said, 'which will help to while the solitary hours, when my brother's far away—

"The Spanish maid went to St. Mary's alone,
To breathe her virgin prayer;
But the hand of the Gaul had the shrine o'erthrown,
Long, long, ere she got there.

Back to her dwelling the Spanish maid sped,
The roof was wrapt in fire;
O'er the dear loved forms of her kindred dead,
It blazed a funeral pyre.

The Spanish maid rushed to the broad sea strand,
When, bounding o'er the bay,
Swept the stately ships of a stranger land,
Crowded with warriors gay.

‘Blood red are your garments,’ the maiden said,

‘Oh, wherefore hie you here?’

The heart of my country already hath bled

Its last—I bear its bier.’

‘Daughter of wo,’ cried the Britons, ‘we come,

To warm that heart again,

To drive the foe from your Southern home,

Or never recross the main.’”

There was a pause of some minutes, during which I continued gazing on her, with an expression of respectful but unequivocal admiration. In modest confusion she broke the silence by inquiring the name of a flower that she culled from a group. I pressed it, half furtively, to my lips, then murmured in apparent forgetfulness, ‘beautiful, most beautiful!’

‘It is indeed a delicate flower,’—said the blushing girl.

‘Equalled by none in the island of its birth!’ I added.

Her fingers passed tremulously over the harp strings. ‘But you have not given it a name.’

‘Miss Rodney!—I am no botanist.’

She moved towards the door-way. ‘Is not that my brother’s footstep?’

‘No, lady—tis but the leaves of autumn, falling as I shall fall, with none to mourn them!’

‘The good are ever mourned.’

‘Yes, when prosperity trumpets forth their virtues. The forest groans above the shattered oak—nature has no sorrow for ‘the rath primrose that forsaken dies.’

‘To every created thing there is an appropriate sphere—within that sphere alone can we hope to be loved and lamented.’

‘True, there is for each a fitting place, could it always be commanded; but how many perish without attaining it, scorned or disregarded!’

‘Can such be wholly blameless?’

‘I am persuaded it is possible. A man may fail to find a home where he has a right to claim it; he may spurn the yoke which accident would fix upon him; he may sigh for the fair and proudly born—to win her he may sacrifice the present and dare the future: yet baffled and despised he may be all his days, and he may surrender his soul to his Creator, a poor, forlorn, broken spirited mortal.’

‘Yours is a sombre fancy.’

‘Experience has colored it. I speak but what I know and what I feel.’

‘Surely that’s my brother’s tread!’

‘Permit me to conduct you to your brother, Miss Rodney; you are weary of me—you hate me. It has been thus with my dearest attachments from the cradle — it will be thus to the grave!’

‘You wrong yourself and me, Mr Earnshaw; as my brother’s friend, I esteem—as—but here, indeed, is Frank—release my hand, I entreat you!’

The spring of a favorite grey hound intimated the coming of his master: we left the hermitage. The unceasing play of his spirits had depressed even Frank. Ellen sat for a little in her bonnet and veil awaiting the return of Mr and Mrs Rodney, then disappeared. Conversation became insupportable. Telling my friend that I should depart from St Ay-mers at day-break, we exchanged a heavy good-night.

In the darkness and quietude of the bed-chamber, with nothing to disturb the stream of thought, the occurrences of the day arising before me in all their magnitude, brought a burning flush to my cheek. Spain, Portugal, the army—it was no illusion!—I should actually witness the grand array of battle, and traverse the enchanting scenes to which I had been often transported on the wings of fiction! I had dared to address the language of passion to the peerless daughter of an ancient house! What would be her opinion of me? How should I meet her again? Yet she was not unmoved; she had not discouraged me; she had

already confessed esteem, and this, from her, was no light acknowledgment.

What was there to beget despair? I was young, enterprising, educated, matched to the genius of the times, which laughed to scorn the pretensions of hereditary superiority. Junot had risen from the ranks; Lasnes gloried in having been a grenadier; their compeers, the children of a revolution, reaped their honors with the sabre. Napoleon himself, had been a needy adventurer, born in a paltry island, where distinction was a farce—a king of which had pined a pauper in an English prison.

To hail our native shore after a season of successful strife, crowned with fame and fortune—Rodney a colonel—I a general! The chance was cheap at any hazard. How exultingly should I lead Ellen to the altar—the lady of Lieutenant General Sir Robert Earnshaw!—O youth!—youth!

CHAPTER IX.

Frank drove me to Thorncroft in a handsome two-horse vehicle fashionable at the period. The plan of our proceedings was definitively fixed, and both were pledged to secrecy. The carriage drew up at the farm-yard, where my aunt stood like a priestess of Ceres, showering the golden grain among the noisy tenants of the roost and pond. She made a very formal return to my friend's conciliatory salute; of mine she took no notice. While engaged in a parting conversation, she desired me, in a most ungracious tone, to attend the cattle to the pasture, as the servants, like myself, chose to make duty wait on pleasure. Lest personal dignity should be still more seriously compromised, I hurried Rodney on his way as expeditiously as I could.

My father came back laboring under a severe cold, and extreme lassitude; in other respects, his journey had been agreeable. The sight of his fireside had a genial influence on his disposition, which was thawed towards us all. I was drawn to him by 'the cords of love,' and

while he spoke mildly and persuasively, there was no sacrifice to filial obedience I was not willing to make. His medical adviser recommended a temporary confinement to the house. To soothe its tediousness, I executed his outdoor commands with fidelity and dispatch; assisted in the arrangement of his accounts, and read to him the books of his choice without wincing under the impression of task-work. He condescended to explain familiarly the advantageous nature of certain recent purchases, and concluded with the observation, 'You know, Robert, it is for you I labor.' The manner in which he pronounced these words was so radiant with affection, that I wondered how I could ever think him stern.

In his altered mood, he communicated his wish that I should speedily resume my studies. It was necessary to be active in preparation, as November was drawing nigh. I was to go through the remainder of the collegiate course at the university of Edinburgh, which he understood to be a school of medicine superior to any in Scotland. Another inducement he had for sending me there, was the offer of a religious family to receive me among its members. He trusted I would give him no farther cause of uneasiness, but persevere manfully and steadily in

a line of action calculated to ensure my own happiness, and to impart peace to his soul ere he descended to the 'narrow house.'

This appeal to kindlier feelings touched me to the quick. I meditated abandoning the military project, and revoking the pledge to Rodney: an unhappy circumstance turned the scale.

I was busied in the dispiriting employment of packing my travelling trunks, and having accidentally left one of them open, my father happened to scrutinize its contents. Above my Bible lay a tasteful series of volumes, which, being strangers to him, he examined to ascertain whether or not, they were worthy of their position. They were the writings of William Shakspeare—a profane stage-player! The Age of Reason, or the scoffs of Voltaire, would not have appeared to him more impiously out of place.

I found him detailing the particulars of the discovery to my aunt, who participated in a horror as violent as it was sincere. Indignation almost smothered his voice, hoarse from the effects of indisposition. He demanded how the collection of vile trash had come into my possession, and what had tempted me to bring the abomination in contact with the Scriptures.

The books, I answered, were the gift of

young Mr Rodney; and their situation in my trunk was entirely undesigned.

‘They shall have their proper situation’ he replied, stirring the fire, and flinging two of the volumes into the flames. The first impulse was to save the remainder; I snatched up one—but pride recoiling from interference with the completion of what I considered a barbarous act, I quitted it into the grate to share the doom of its fellows. Uttering an exclamation that has since caused me many a remorseful pang, and clashing the door very unbecomingly behind me, I went forth internally raging like a volcano.

The estrangment between us now was greater than it had been before. To his culpable leniency my father imputed the indecorous display of temper. I was sullenly resentful of the destruction of my friend’s gift, which I regarded as invaluable. While in this frame of mind, there came a confidential communication from Rodney, enclosing a bank note for ten pounds, and summoning me to the Isle of Wight within fourteen days. It was expected at home that I should depart for Edinburgh in the interval.

The last shirt had been deposited in its nook, the trunks corded, and distinguished by cards,

inscribed, Mr Robert Earnshaw, passenger for Edinburgh, a seat in an early morning-coach secured, and nothing but money required to complete my equipment. A message from my father intimated that this awaited my acceptance. Language cannot describe how singularly I am affected by the recollection of that interview.

Thorncroft was an old, compact, two-story building—neat, but small. It contained two sitting apartments—below stairs, the parlor, above, what household usage styled ‘the great room,’ not because its dimensions actually entitled it to the name, for it was only about twelve feet square, but on account of its being the largest room in the dwelling. I could enumerate every article of furniture in ‘the great room.’ They impressed themselves, on my mind at an age when I borrowed from it all my conceptions of household splendor. Over the mantel-piece frowned the dusky portrait of our Parliamentary ancestor, stiff with unshrinking resolve, buff defences, and brawny thewes. On its left side depended his trusty broad-sword, carefully preserved from rust—on its right, in a little wall-cove, was his Bible, resplendent with huge silver clasps, rarely touched save on occasions connected with the

genealogy of the family, of which its unprinted pages bore the record. A sober bit of carpeting almost covered the floor. The fire-place was spacious and embellished with curious devices. Adjacent to it was a comfortable corner, where stood a high-backed arm chair, stuffed for the invalid, or the half-hour slumberer. The remaining objects of any note, were eight chairs, a table, and a desk-topped chest of drawers, all of substantial oak, carved like the ornamental wood-work of a Gothic Cathedral. During indisposition, my father, as his bed-chamber was immediately adjoining, made choice of this apartment, and in it he granted audience for the purpose of furnishing my college charges.

Nearly sixty summers had wrought their tracery on his massive brow; early toil had stooped his shoulders; and the depression arising from illness made the peculiarity more observable. His neglected beard, and thin, gray, disparted locks, to which he paid exemplary attention when in health, gave him a worn and anxious aspect. A pallid hue overmastered the brown dye of his cheek, and the dull blue veins of his large-boned freckled hands, were marked in strong relief.

When I entered the room, he was leaning

thoughtfully back in the large chair; his legs crossed, his right arm resting on the table, above some papers covered with arithmetical calculations, his spectacles gently compressed between the finger and thumb of his left hand, which was supported by his knee. I stood at the opposite side of the table, until laconically desired to be seated. He adjusted his spectacles, drew a key from a pocket, of his waistcoat, and opened the desk, the recondite repositories of which, in the licensed times of childhood, I used to strain my limber neck to explore. At this moment I can almost think I hear the slight asthmatic cough that accompanied his movement.

Unfolding a cumbrous black leather pocket-book, he drew from its leaves sundry small parcels of bank notes, varying in amount, each tied with silk thread, after a very orderly fashion, and bearing an inscription indicating its value; these he severally rereckoned, and bidding me see if all were right, delivered over the total—fifty guineas—stating that, comprising as it did a sufficiency for reasonable expenses, it should not be increased in any case by a single penny. His hand trembled while transferring the money; I was conscience-stricken in taking it—and heaven forgive-me!—some fiend

possessed me with the black idea that he parted it with reluctance.

I lingered for the last commands, and accustomed admonition; he gave neither, but asked why I did not retire to rest.

I told him I awaited his final instructions.

‘Your own are better!’—he said; ‘mine have been ‘like water, which, when sprinkled upon the ground, cannot be gathered up again.’ Leave me—your aunt will have your breakfast ready before day; if she choose to be your slave, well and good—I shall be so no longer. Do as you please hereafter—I have discharged my duty; where the grace of God aboundeth not, it is useless to expend words in controversy.’

‘Good-night, Sir!’

‘Oh, good night!’ he responded, and his voice sank upon my ear like an echo from the tomb.

On descending to the parlor to breakfast, I was overcome by sudden faintness, as if risen from fever’s debilitating bed. Every travelling preparation, including an excellent meal, was in a state of forwardness. I drank a cup of tea, but was unable to eat a particle. My attentive relative could not suppress her concern. She selected the choicest viands, and added them to the store she had appropriated for my

journey. As she bustled to and fro in the dim light, a vision of past endearments swam before me, and I was subdued to an infant's tenderness.

The trunks were stowed in the covered cart; the muffling completed even to the thick outside neckerchief. I stood like a statue in the centre of 'the great room,' my breast surging with contending emotions. 'Bid farewell to your father,' said my aunt.

I hesitated from an habitual fear of offending, when, opening the chamber door, she impelled me lightly forward. He was awake.

'I am come to say farewell, father!'

His heart was taken by surprise; he clasped me with both his hands, and exclaimed, 'God bless you, my son!' In the porch my aunt embraced me. I cast a last glance behind. It might be an illusion, but a figure seemed to be planted at the window of the 'great room'—Guide of my youth, I would fain be persuaded that it was not thine!

Inconstant as the face of the waters is the mind of man; over it the senses exercise their capricious dominion, playing with its moods and purposes, as the winds sport with the falling leaf. With the ordinary transitions of light and darkness, the change from the

town to the country, from the land to the sea, our thoughts fluctuate, our determinations falter. On the lonely mountain we hold communion with God—on the mart of the swarming city we do reverence to Mammon. Within the precincts of a court, poverty wears the downward look of crime; in the seclusion of the valley it assumes the erect port and unflinching brow of virtue. Passing from the glare of the gay assembly, to the rayless solitude of the midnight pillow, we peruse, by the flashes of reflection, the story of the day. Our temples throb when we review the disordered company of words and actions to which we have given birth. The willing dupes of social deception, we have gulped the honey draughts of flattery as the offering of sincerity, and have rendered the expected return with the flippancy of conscious and confirmed falsehood. To gratify avarice, or low ambition, we have bartered the mutual and mercenary lie. The soul hovers with wearied wings above the diurnal waste courting the covert of oblivion. It flies for refuge to the sanctuary of repentance, and seeks to make its peace on high by vows of reformation. Lulled by the anticipation of what 'to-morrow shall bring forth,' excluding

the terrific phantoms of abused existence, it resigned itself to a happy torpor. Tomorrow comes; Commerce pours forth its ants from their hillocks; Fashion wings its butterflies to the sunbeam; Pride urges its thundering steeds along the streets and highways: the vows of amendment vanish with the nocturnal vapors, and we are again the creatures of yesterday; busy members of the grand confederacy against the peace and dignity of human kind.

Change of scene, and the rush of new-born hopes, dissipated, or alleviated the regrets which clogged my receding steps from the abode of honest independence. As the coach whirled along, I conjured up brilliant images of military life: horsed and plumed like Murat, I headed the charge, awoke the trumpet among the hills, or made town and tower tremble before the roar of artillery. To the sublimity of siege and battle succeeded the revelling of victory—the studied magnificence of triumph. On the hard-fought field, hosts of the brave paid homage to the conqueror; in the vast square of the imperial city he rode conspicuous amidst armed multitudes, waving banners, the smiles of beauty, and the acclamations of the populace!

At Taunton I altered my route, taking the

road to Weymouth. My travelling companions were an old lady and a Somersetshire farmer; the latter was going in search of his son, who had fled from home, with the intention of becoming a sailor. He was loud in his denunciations of vengeance against the fugitive, who, it was obvious, notwithstanding, predominated in his affections. During the whole of the way, his boy was the subject of his incessant conversation, to the evident annoyance of the matron to whom he directed his discourse, who tried in vain to damp his communicativeness by monosyllabic replies. The dialogue was sustained in a strain something similar to this:—

‘ Whoy, I zooppose, ma’am, thee never heard in all thoy born days, of zo outrageous a vagabond as my Zim; there wur he, deame and I keeping un, an he wur the apple of our oye—we didn’t cramp un wi’ larnin—not we. Went out and coomed in when he thought fit, joost loike a squoire—wuz free to go to the zellar, and zwill ale and zoider for the long zummer day. An’ wauns !—what’s the quen-seconce? Whoy, he never zays nought to deame nor oy, but steals away loike a thief, loike a black-hearted, ungrateful thief ! Naow ma’am, what thinks thee of that ?’

‘Perhaps you punished him too severely.’

‘Noa, never punished un at all; to be zure oy did thresh un zometimes, but what zignified that to a stout chap wi’ a back loike a mill door? I’ll be revenged of the Judas, dang me if oy dont! Shouldn’t oy ma’am?’

‘The young person has acted very wickedly, and deserves to suffer.’

‘As thee zays ma’am, yet for deame’s zake I shouldn’t wish him to zuffer mooch neither; what’s he done after all? Gone a larking for a month!—he’ll be waundily glad to zheer whoam, and thee couldn’t but loove the rascal, if thee zaw’st un; he’s zo toightish, and zooch a cricketter!’

I was well pleased when our arrival at Weymouth put a stop to the farmer’s complaints of his son’s ingratitude. The similitude between Sim’s conduct and my own, awakened painful feelings despite the uncouth phraseology in which the story was conveyed. Alighting at the Crown and Anchor, the farmer commenced his inquiries after ‘Zim.’ I went on board a trim-sailing coasting vessel, which landed me at Cowes.

Following the directions given in Rodney’s letter, I speedily discovered him. Our meeting was characterized by the warmth that an-

imates hearts on which the world has not yet set its seal. He repeated the assurances of his friendship; entreated me to be perfectly at ease as to regimental concerns; introduced me to his acquaintances; and aided in arranging the preliminaries by which I was to become regularly attached to the service.

There was a strange medley of characters among the officers at the depot—English, Welsh, Irish and Scotch: some smoothed by friction with society, others bristling with nationalities. Among them I recognized my arrogant school-fellow Peel, who had been promoted to a lieutenancy in our corps.

When the gloss of novelty had worn away, I began to tire of the island and inactivity. My conception of the military gentleman was borrowed from the antique portraiture of Plutarch, and the high-colored records of knight-hood. In the majority of my associates, I discerned none of the qualities which constitute the ideal hero. Dinners, wines, wagers, and prospects of advancement, were their graver themes; stale jokes, and marvellous sporting anecdotes, thickly garnished with oaths, formed their staple of entertainment. Frontless and monopolizing selfishness was apparent nearly in all, except those who had lately attained

their 'blushing honors.' With few of them was I disposed to mingle. Rodney's versatility and vivacity extracted amusement out of every body.

Oppressed by occasional fits of sadness, I, to indulge them uninterruptedly, made solitary rambles by the sea-beach. I recollect one melancholy evening stroll, the weather was chill and showery. A vessel, anchored hard by the shore, looked like a ship the crew of which had died of pestilence and famine. The weary waves broke upon the strand with a desponding cadence. Unmindful of the spray, I turned my face towards the distant coast of Devon and then, for the first time, arose the thought that perhaps I might never see it more! What would be my father's answer to his friends when they asked of news from Robert? He would vainly seek the Scottish post-mark on his letters; he would open one in the familiar hand, and terrible would be the shock to his spirit on learning that I was journeying on the waters to a hostile land! To my poor aunt, grief for my flight, and struggling with the wounded feeling of her brother, would bring a double portion of bitterness. Had I been too precipitate?—Whether or not, the acknowledgement were unavailing! The Rubicon was passed!

Detected by Frank in these meditative walks, he rallied me on the early symptoms of homesickness. He prescribed the remedy so frequently and so fatally administered for the maladies of the mind. Inviting a select set, he circulated the bottle with the ardor of a bacchanalian veteran; and laughing me to intemperance, was satisfied that he rendered the service of a friend. The example was infectious: one debauch became the forerunner of another. Taught to boast of the extent to which my constitution permitted me to degrade intellect and oppress nature, I acted like a promising pupil of the tumultuous school whose precepts are madness, whose practice is destruction. Yet even then the fervor of imagination saved me from degenerating into an earthy lump of libertinism. However vitiated my companions, or worthless their pursuits, they were viewed through a medium which lessened their defects, and relieved their grossness.

We at length embarked, and a favorable wind wafted us to sea. I despatched a letter to Thorncroft, expressing sorrow for the practice of deception, and declaring that I was forced to this clandestine course by my father's antipathy to the profession of my choice, and his

resolve to compel me to prosecute that which I abhorred. I was silent as to the particulars of my situation, but protested solemnly and repeatedly that, under every circumstance, I should be vigilant in promoting the respectability of the family.

The voyage was unattended by any event of consequence. The wretched 'accommodations' of a crowded transport made it sufficiently disagreeable to landsmen; and our patience was tried by the rolling billows of the Bay of Biscay. Comparatively free from sickness, I had leisure to remark the helplessness of soldiers on an unaccustomed element. A sea-boy displayed more energy and animation than an athletic grenadier. Such is the omnipotence of habit.

We bounded over the bar of the Tagus in safety, and landed near the castle of Belem, exulting in the firm pressure of the maternal earth. Our reception by the people for whom we were about to shed our blood, fell far short of my expectations. They barely refrained from molesting us, evincing neither hospitality nor enthusiasm. Swarthy women, and men who reminded me of the bravoës of the theatre, were the only representatives of beauty and chivalry we encountered. The houses were in general

mean; their filth revolting. Such were the first impressions; there was no time for systematic examination. The order to march put our ranks in motion, and we pushed forward with alacrity until we joined the army, under Lord Wellington, within the lines of Torres Vedras.

CHAPTER XI.

The scenes in which I was about to be an actor have been depicted by various writers as the most memorable in the history of the Peninsular war. Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida having capitulated to the French, the British commander had recrossed the Portuguese frontier, followed by Massena at the head of the corps of Junot, Ney, and Regnier. Defeated at Busaco, the enemy fruitlessly endeavored to intercept the retreat of the allied forces, who, accompanied by a crowd of miserable fugitives, gained, with little loss and in good order, the formidable position in which we found them.

I am neither qualified nor inclined to play the military critic. My bosom no longer throbs in glad commotion to the sound of trumpet and drum. To me the phraseology of the camp was always a repulsive jargon—now it appears nothing better than the gibberish of banditti. I shall, therefore, abstain from adding another description, to the many already volunteered by the sons of the sword, of the defences, natural and artificial, by which we were protected on the heights of Torres Vedras. Whether the

lines were works entirely new, or old ones reconstructed; whether the glory of their erection belonged to the Portuguese engineers, or to the hero of Waterloo, are points with respect to which I feel in the last degree indifferent.

There are recollections of the period that leave the mind no room for entertaining the dull technicalities of slaughter. The country had been deserted on the advance of the invading army. The forlorn inhabitants, homeless, penniless, and despairing, thronged towards the capital, darkening its vicinity by the dismal aspect of the most grievous suffering. Of many piteous sights I was the unwilling witness: I was informed of others still more appalling. Like deer driven into a narrow fastness, whence there is no egress but through a band of savage hunters, the unhappy children of the soil were cooped within the confined district between the western extremity of the mountainous chain called the Sierra de Estrella, the Tagus, and the sea. Thither had they flocked at an adverse season of the year—old and young, vigorous and infirm; bearing as much as was portable of what the poor are fain to dignify by the name of property, and groaning under the dire conviction that their habitations would be

given to the flames—their gardens trampled under the horse-hoofs of hostile squadrons—their vineyards and olive-grounds made utterly, and for them irretrievably, desolate!

Happy in her insular situation, England knows not by experience the multitudinous calamities of the devoted territory on which kings and conquerors celebrate their sanguinary revels. Perhaps she had been morally wiser and better for receiving one fearful lesson from the destroyers. Peace might then have been to her a word of holier import. Yet I cannot, from any hope of ulterior good, wish her the possession of knowledge at so heavy a price. Fancy shudders at the thought of foreign legions polluting our domestic sanctuaries, recklessly converting whatever is most dear to virtuous tranquillity to the black purposes of havoc and spoliation. We refuse to admit the horrid possibility of our churches being turned into loop-holed defences or ruinous shelters for the drowsy soldiery; our spacious highways, noble bridges, and magnificent streets, broken and blown up in the retreat or the siege; our fruit-trees; and ornamental shrubs cut down for watch-fires, our hoarded treasures prodigally scattered among the ruffian followers of the camp; the privacy of our most

hallowed retirements laid bare to every ribald musketeer; the sacred hearth, where the embers have shed their cheerful light on honored ancestral faces, flooded with kindred blood; the recesses to which wives, sisters, and daughters have flown in the tremendous hour of the assault, burst open by wretches veiling the passions of hell under the features of humanity: we arm the spirit against the intrusion of such hideous imaginings; but we contemplate without regret, not unfrequently with satisfaction, our agency in bringing the scourge of war upon other nations, and read of the extermination of thousands of our fellow-creatures with an interest as inconsiderate as that excited by the perusal of the fantastic combats in a poetic tale.

The reflection may be premature, yet I cannot restrain the expression of astonishment at the homage paid to the fell system by which the ills that afflict mankind are increased an hundred fold. It is marvellous that he who, by felicitous invention, or exquisite skill, has pre-eminently ministered to the happiness of society, should not receive a tithe of the proud acknowledgment vouchsafed to him who, accidentally elevated to command, obtains the devilish distinction of marshalling the march

of ruin; of consigning the flower of the youth of many lands to a common charnel-pit; of making wives, widows—parents, childless—children, fatherless. 'The idle delight' still taken by Europeans in military gewgawry, demonstrates that they have yet to attain intellectual civilization; they continue to unite with the savage in admiration of bawbles and feathers; and until the name of a mercenary soldier shall sink into a term of reproach, the most polished community in Christendom will in vain presume upon its freedom from the darkest taint of barbarism.

The regiment with which my friend and I were incorporated formed part of the division under General Hill, stationed at the village of Alhandra, on the Tagus. The appearance of our new comrades was very different from the elaborate neatness and ingenious foppery that in England marked the parade or the review. Campaigning had made sad inroads on the appointments of officers and men. There were few countenances on which fatigue and hard fare had not left very legible traces; and though food was then sufficiently abundant, there seemed to be a general impatience of the harassing duties consequent on the maintenance in the field, during winter, of a defensive attitude in presence of a superior force.

When once fairly absorbed by the business of the time, there was something inspiring in this novel mode of existence. Stimulated by the great game of life and death, incessant activity and vigilance proved more tolerable than insecure ease. The total absence of leisure prevented the depression that would have arisen from being a cold spectator of scenes where there was much to deplore; it also shielded me from the painful recollections which must have weighed down the unoccupied thoughts.

Attached to Rodney's company, I was the partner of his quarters, and, in everything that could indicate generous regard, his actions outstripped his promises. Amidst danger and privation, his careless good-humor shone forth unobscured. When I inveighed against the petty, exasperating warfare in which we wasted our energies, he chanted the theme of my complaint, in an extempore stanza, or sketched an amusing picture of the 'sensation,' that would be created by the veteran officers of our army, were they transported in their present plight, into the metropolitan region of St James's.

On the fourteenth of November, the French general, after ineffectual attempts to force our

position, ordered his troops into cantonments. The allies, with the exception of Picton's division, pressed upon the steps of the retreating foe, as far as the neighborhood of Santarem. Finding that no advantage could be derived from the prosecution of hostilities, the commander-in-chief permitted us likewise to enjoy the luxury of winter-quarters. Hill's division was distributed in three villages on the southern bank of the Tagus.

About this period there happened an event which, with the painful emotions it excited, adheres to my remembrance with the tenacity peculiar to distressing occurrences.

The only person I had seen after our arrival in Portugal, whom I could distinguish as having met before, was a private soldier named Edward Lawrence, the son of a small farmer residing a mile or two from Thorncroft. Lawrence was a fine-looking young man, rash and thoughtless it is true, but free from any marked irregularities of conduct. He served in our light company, and I was indebted to him for various little attentions which, in the chances of campaigning, even an individual of his humble grade will occasionally have it in his power to bestow. Coming from my own county, it was natural that I should take an interest in him, as he did in me.

Lawrence had sustained, as he conceived, unmerited provocation from a corporal named Stephens, who, being of an over-bearing disposition, by his subsequent behaviour rather aggravated than allayed his resentment. It chanced that Lawrence, making merry with some of his associates, neglected the regular call of duty. Stephens, unfortunately the instrument of his arrest, chose in the discharge of his functions to indulge in an offensive remark. To this the reply was a blow. The unhappy offender was doomed to endure the punishment of contempt of discipline, inebriety, and insubordination. It is needless to enumerate the circumstances connected with his trial. The infliction of three hundred lashes was the mitigated sentence of the court martial.

On a bleak morning of December, the whole of the division was under arms at the village of Barcas. A hollow square was formed, in the centre of which three halberts were planted triangularly in the ground, having their steel tops locked together. Beside them stood my ill-fated acquaintance, attended by the agents of military justice. He was muffled in his great coat; and while the adjutant read aloud the award of the court martial, he neither declined his head nor looked to the right or

left, but apparently fortified his powers of endurance for that which was to follow. The troops, as is usual on such occasions, stood at 'attention.'

When the adjutant had completed his task, the surgeon, with his watch in his hand, advanced to the triangle. The prisoner was stripped to his shirt, which, being slipped upward, assisted in making fast his arms to the halberts. His lower limbs were likewise confined, and folds of cotton cloth were inserted at the waistband of his trousers, that the blood might stream outwards.

One of the drummers, a man of spare but sinewy proportions, bared his hairy right arm, passed the instrument of flagellation through his fingers, and retreating some steps to collect his force by a rapid advance, awaited the word. I caught the dread command, and involuntarily closed my eyes. The first sharp stroke of the lash resounded almost simultaneously with the motion. A sympathetic shivering pervaded the ranks like a gust of wind agitating the forest foliage.

'Attention, soldiers!' cried the adjutant, at the highest pitch of his boatswain like voice.

Startled, I cast a glance in the direction of the sufferer. Stroke after stroke descended on his muscular frame with frightful precision and

rapidity. Each left a track as if cut by the surgeon's knife; yet not a moan betrayed the agonies of nature—not a breath, even when the thongs, soaked with the crimson stream, seemed to part reluctantly from the raw and gory surface.

I could sustain the sight of the barbarous spectacle no longer; my heart grew sick, my brain began to swim—I reeled, and fell forward on the sword.

‘Attention!’ vociferated the adjutant. Such a trifling incident was not allowed to interfere with the routine of discipline; I was suffered to remain unassisted until the rigor of martial law had been fully satisfied.

Lawrence was borne to the hospital, never having flinched throughout the course of his excruciating ordeal. On his recovery, he rejoined the corps. Both in body and in mind he had undergone a revolution. He, whose capacious chest, erect neck, and well-set shoulders, gave him a manliness of deportment unimprovable by drill, was bent and gathered up as if he had grown old before his time. Unlike the majority of those who have endured corporal punishment, the sense of degradation urged him into no course of self-abandonment. He declined the customary allowance

of wine; was silent, reserved, solitary; scrupulous in the performance of his duty, shunning familiarity with former intimates; and avoiding the formation of new friendships.

About six months afterwards, on the eve of the battle of Albuera, Lawrence and his enemy Stephens were sent on a reconnoitering party among the hills. In a heavy fog they were separated from their comrades. The next morning, when every one was expected to be at his post, they were still missing. The obstinate field was dearly won; in bearing off the wounded, the body of the Corporal was discovered lying in a grassy hollow. His left arm had been shattered by a musket-ball and he was disfigured by repeated stabs of a bayonet, the least of which was sufficient to have ensured the mortality of a giant. It was supposed that he had fallen a victim to the vengeance of the fugitive soldier.

For above a year conjecture busied itself in vain concerning the fate of the presumed assassin. It was the current belief that he had deserted to the foe. At the battle of Salamanca, there appeared among our skirmishers a man whose desperate bravery was productive of astonishment even in the hurry and confusion of an engagement. Apparently bullet-proof

he approached close to the French columns; and taking deliberate aim at the officers shot several in succession, as an expert marksman would bring down the *branchers* in a rookery. He was crushed at last beneath a charge of cavalry, from which he made no effort to escape. Some of the spectators of his daring had him conveyed to the rear. He was dead; and it was known from papers on his person, as well as by living testimony, that the mangled corpse was the sad remains of Edward Lawrence.

CHAPTER XII.

The wild spirit of adventure, which had given an inexpressible charm to my foreign career did not prove a permanent source of enjoyment. The chivalry of the Peninsula, that brightened the daydreams among the shades of Devon, had vanished with the knight of Mancha, and left, as its representatives, a sensual, corrupt, and ignorant nobility. Many dark-eyed maidens glanced across my path, but none to be compared to the fanciful creations whose voices of syren melody never ceased to summon me until I abandoned home. Winter had receded within the icy circle of the north; a southern spring, by many a vernal token, assured us of its presence; Nature, in holy struggle with the devastating hand of man reared her flowers and her fruitage in the very foot-print of Strife. But the pleasant influences of the external world were as passing glimpses of an Eden from the fruition of which I was debarred by the flaming brand of national discord. I was as a traveller in a majestic African landscape, who, while he offers up silent adoration

in a temple worthy of the Omnipotent, is roused from his quiet ecstasies by the shriek of the chacal, the lion's growl, and the rustling of the cobra de capello.

There were moments when I doubted the probability of ever arriving at distinction in the profession of arms. I was disgusted by its practical details—its marches and counter-marches—posts and pickets—purveying and bivouacking. My courage, too, was not of the *catapulta* character—always, with stubborn front, prepared for obstacles. It required an animating opportunity for the display of its energies; after the excitement of an introductory trial, it was, in average circumstances, actuated merely by the dread of disgrace, and the desire of self-preservation.

According to my experience, few subjects have more profitlessly employed mankind than the possession of the quality called valor, which, if interpreted to be either the love or the contempt of danger and death, never tenanted the breast of humanity. It is a sovereign law of our being, that our affections should gravitate towards earth: a law that no ordinance of stoicism can nullify. If the wish to wear out our allotted term in the sphere to which we are wedded by our organization, had

not been kneaded with our elements, the globe would ere long be without a reasoning inhabitant. At every gust of spleen or vapor of melancholy, we would apply to those desperate expedients that are now the refuge of insanity, or of a state of mental derangement amounting to insanity, resulting from the artificial evils of the social system. Therefore it is that the Almighty has in his wisdom drawn a mysterious and impenetrable curtain over the future. Did our finite perceptions repose with complete assurance on an eternal landing-place, it would be a light matter to overleap the precipice of time. But before us yawns the abyss in its black immensity, and we cling to the feeblest shrub rather than descend into its shadows.

Bravery and cowardice, resistance and terror, are common to all, modified by a thousand accidents of health, education, time, and place. A powerful imagination, and a sensitive frame, constitute nervous timidity; from a dull brain and a robust body is moulded unhesitating animal daring. The former quakes at the apprehension of the slightest ill which it beholds looming gigantic through the mists of fantasy; the latter goes right on, trusting to sensation for the announcement of peril. To the one,

familiarity with danger is almost emancipation from fear; to the other, the first mischance is an intimation that it has entered upon a hazardous road, whence to escape with honor is desirable.

It is singular that multitudes submit to be led to slaughter without the incitement of anger or hate; but many will bleed with a good grace in company, who would tremble at a solitary death-bed. To retreat is worse than to advance; and hope whispers to each that few are the conflicts of which there has been no survivor. Thus it is that those who, in boyhood, have been taunted as effeminate, frequently acquit themselves resolutely in fight, and return with the testimonials of intrepidity.

One powerful feeling swallows up another. The chance of death is preferred to the certainty of intolerable ill. Timorous persons will appeal to the decision of the duel rather than innovate upon the wicked absurdities of a conventional code. In defence of her household treasures, the weakness of woman has more than once superseded the methodical hardihood of the cannonier.

Some are exquisitely susceptible of pain, and would choose the insensibility of the sepulchre

before the couch of sickness. To them, the possibility of suffering is almost equivalent to the reality; and to be within range of shot is to undergo the agonies of amputation. In this class I might have included myself—but with a large allowance for the impetuosity of passions that overlooked contingency.

To me the most perturbing thought, when preparing for an expected contest, was neither a calculation of the opponent's prowess, nor yet the dread of subsequent bodily torture. I reflected that, ere the morrow's sunset, I should perhaps be with the dead. Others might continue to fashion their acts by the will of a terrestrial superior; a transient lapse of hours might whirl me before the tribunal of God. This idea expelled every subordinate sentiment. When it fixed its grasp upon my soul, I went not forth merely to unbare a weapon, in frantic quarrel, against a fellow creature, but to build myself up for encountering all that inspires awe in him who plants his faith on immortality, and is swayed by the persuasion of Heaven's retributive justice.

In the beginning of my military noviciate I rioted in freedom from paternal bondage, for such I considered the sober maxims that had bridled my youth. I was become a man, and

mated with warriors old and approved. The license of the camp absolved me from what I accounted the wearisome ceremonial of public and private worship. Religion only interfered at intervals; in periods of despondency, or amid the gathering thunders of the French artillery.

I soon discovered, however, that one species of restraint had been exchanged for another more oppressive. I had never been accustomed to greet the matin song of the lark; now, at four o'clock, every morning, whether the atmosphere smiled or frowned, I was obliged to appear on the mustering-ground. With frugality I had been acquainted; but I had served no apprenticeship to hunger or fatigue. I had acknowledged a master whose injunctions originated in anxiety for my welfare; I was turned over to the caprice of an iron authority, that would have estimated some battered and blackened pile as cheaply won by the sacrifice of thousands like Robert Earnshaw.

There was, in addition to these, a secret and paramount source of vexation and disappointment. I was naturally, as has been elsewhere said, warm-tempered and affectionate—slow to perceive, but fiercely resentful of slight; leaning my spirit upon love and kind accordances,

as infancy rests its yielding step upon parental tenderness. The practical assumption of supremacy by wealth or title I neither could admit nor comprehend, nor did it ever occur to me that equality in these matters was indispensable to friendship.

Enlightenment came—unwillingly and in doubt, but in manifestations too obvious to be long misunderstood. When the pauses of campaigning brought the officers of our regiment in social contact, it was difficult to explain how or why, but at their meetings I always felt isolated from the genial flow of gay communion.

Rudeness or incivility there was none—I could have wished there had been, for then I should have known how to have dealt with it. On the contrary, I was overlaid with the dry externals of common-place politeness—was invariably addressed as ‘Sir,’ and ‘Mr;’ and when spoken of to Rodney, was usually mentioned under the style of his ‘friend.’ My remarks were met with decorous replies of two or three syllables; my sparing attempts at humor were recognized by the phantom of a smile; attentions, springing from the sincere desire of adding to the general enjoyment, were declined, or where

such a course must have worn the guise of an affront, accepted with a rigidity of courtesy truly insupportable. To this there was some exception among the older officers, but with them my intercourse was trifling. I gradually estranged myself from their assemblies; and though Rodney protested against this disposition to solitude, it was easy to read in his manner that it gave him no displeasure.

Peel was destined to be my evil genius. When his image rises before me, I am almost inclined to confound the ways of Providence, and to indulge the belief that there are individuals born under envious planets, doomed to inherit a life-lease of animosity uncontrollable by their volition. He had commenced his persecution with my inoffensive boyhood; the first recognition of his glazy eye at the Isle of Wight assured me that, when occasion served, he would glory in its continuance.

It was the boast of the junior officers of our corps that they were—commissions apart—gentlemen; which word, so far as I could guess at the meaning they attached to it, signified the sons of persons in good circumstances, and unconnected with trade. Their ‘Gentleman’ might have a merchant, tradesman, or farmer or his grandsire, but if his immediate progeni-

tor were of the forbidden caste, his pretensions to the term were inadmissible—unless, indeed, the family wealth were of such aristocratic magnitude, as to entitle the cadets of the house to patrician investiture. I was beyond the pale of this gentility. I had not his Majesty's warrant as a substitute for elder honors:—I was a dependent on the son of Mr Rodney, of St Aymers. These facts were known to Lieutenant Peel, whose uncle was a General—whose ancestry was indisputably ancient; and he conceived himself bound to communicate them to his brother officers, lest their escutcheons should receive a blot from incautious familiarity with a 'person' of yesterday. The language in which he conveyed the revelation was coined in the mint of his malevolence. It left an impression to my prejudice, which dispassionate representation would have failed to produce.

In June, 1811, our regiment was included in the part of the army directly under the orders of Lord Wellington, then quartered for some weeks in certain villages, north of the Tagus. Soult had retired to Seville; Marmont had proceeded in the direction of Salamanca. We experienced a temporary release from the restlessness of alarm and manœuvring. In the interval of tranquillity, sport, pastime,

and the various aids of hilarity were resorted to as the merited recompense of antecedent toil.

A rural entertainment was given to the British officers by the Count of Santa Rosa, on his estate, near Almadilla. I was among the number of the invited, and, owing to the novelty of the occasion, was led to depart from my secluded habits. Rodney declined going; on what grounds I have forgotten.

The weather was delicious: any inconvenience that might have arisen from the heat, was obviated by the lateness of the specified hour, which was considerably after sunset. An ample saloon, ornamented with silvan decorations, had been fitted up for dancing. Music, with refreshments suited to the season, were added to the attraction of gardens, noble in extent, and tasteful in plan. The mansion and its environs had escaped the ravages of war. The laughing groups, promenading, in picturesque uniforms, among groves of the citron and orange, resembled rather light-hearted masqueraders, than men recently relieved from the turmoil of legalized destruction.

An elegant supper terminated the entertainments of the evening. Tables were arranged in separate sections in the great hall, so that the parties at each were individualized, while

they, at the same time, composed one brilliant array of festivity. Unless where the Count himself presided, there was no particular regulation as to the allocation of the guests. I took a seat at the board with a knot of unaffected and jocund spirits, chiefly Irish; Peel, and a group of his supercilious compeers, were at an adjoining table.

I had roamed among the bowers, and, shrouded by the odorous foliage, resigned my spirit to a train of reflection, pensively pleasing, awakened by moonlight, music, and the tremulous flow of waters. From Thorncroft; which, to my inward vision, appeared like virtuous humbleness, silently upbraiding the faithless one, over whose love the world and worldly things have triumphed, I passed to St Aymers, the daughter of whose lord shone with a pallid beauty, as from her vesper window she seemed to gaze tearfully over the misty meadow-lands, in quest of the returning form of him, who would have laid the sovereignty of empires at her feet. I pictured our interview after years of absence. To the tale of abortive efforts and expiring hopes, I heard her faint reply of sweet encouragement. I spoke to her of felicity, entirely our own—the unobtrusive flower of some remote vale, where

the chariot wheels of grandeur had never stirred an echo—and my bosom was quickened into new life beneath the thrill of acquiescence, just perceptible in the delicate pressure of her lily fingers.

In this mantle of soft illusion was I wrapt, when called to mingle with companions bent on the liberal circulation of the wine-cup. My mood inclining me to participate in their enthusiasm, I did equal justice to the goblets, in which we pledged our country and our friends. It was carried, by acclamation, that each should honor the glass with the name of a lady. Reserve and discretion are evanescent before the juice of the grape. When it came to my turn, I announced, with, perhaps, intemperate emphasis,—‘Miss Rodney, of St Ay-mers.’ After copious libations, we took leave of our host.

About a week afterwards, Frank and I were alone together. With a severity of countenance he had never assumed before, and a disagreeable ceremoniousness of language, he begged to be informed as to the accuracy of a communication which had been made to him. This communication was an account furnished by Peel, in his malicious manner, of my having ‘toasted’ Miss Rodney, at the Count’s festi-

val. I promptly and explicitly avowed what had occurred, without affecting to palliate a proceeding, which I could not regard as in any way culpable. We were talking at the moment. When I had pronounced the admission, he abruptly stopped, and, in a tone that rang imperiously upon my ear, observed—

‘Earnshaw, we are still friends;—if we are to remain so, this must not be repeated.’

A hasty survey of his features certified that he was in no sportive vein. I could hardly have been more stunned had I unexpectedly discovered that we were close upon the enemy’s guns. Diverging suddenly into a shady path, I quitted him without uttering a word. In a tangled nook I lay until daylight had declined, alternating between the gloomiest pride and the weakness of a girl. On my return, I discerned the figures of some subalterns, who were engaged in mirthful converse. Little disposed to sympathize in their glee, I struck into a different track. That night, disdaining the shelter of a roof, I made a tent of my cloak, and kept watch with the stars at the foot of a cork-tree.

CHAPTER XIII.

Deeply will he repent his folly, who, retaining the distinctions of an honorable nature, permits himself, be his motives or impressions what they may, to accept the condition of a dependant. It is misery to eat, by sufferance, the bread of him whom we cannot look upon without anger or disesteem. Even the self-rewarding munificence of friendship falls short of a sufficient guarantee for the consequences of relinquishing the identity of our independence. Vacillation and misconception levy a discount, to which the best offerings of humanity are liable. If we would seek to evade the payment of it, our amicable transactions must be established upon a manly and definite basis. Until the selfish chase after temporalities shall wax obsolete in the universal adoption of the sublime idea of a real Common-Weal, Wisdom admonishes us that it is better to dispense the bounty of a benefactor, than to entwine the garland of gratitude.

Notwithstanding what had occurred, Rodney, as formerly, exhibited daily indications of good will. Indeed, he evinced an increased desire to lessen the irksomeness of my situation.

But the load of obligation, felt for the first time, was already greater than I could unrepiningly bear. If I were unable to diminish, I was at least determined not to aggravate, it unnecessarily. He gradually forbore to press favors which were constantly declined. The character of our intercourse, and relations underwent a silent change. We resembled unwilling voyagers in the same vessel, who, without the open display of mutual antipathy, privately cherish the anticipation of the period that will release them from the wearisomeness of an association in which accident has perversely involved them.

The fervor of military infatuation became wonderfully abated. Imagination could not always dignify a dull, a cruel, an indiscriminating profession. I saw that I might long submit my person as a target to the *tirailleurs* of Bonaparte, yet remain unrewarded by the petty distinction of an ensigncy. Having wilfully embarked on the pestilent waters of contention, there was no choice left, save to abide the fortune of the billows. Could I revisit my native land, humiliated and unsuccessful? Could I suppose that my father would forgive me?

Although the French recalled us to the field,

months rolled past unsignalized by a single remarkable achievement. I fruitlessly sighed for an opportunity of securing, in despite of disadvantages, a rank in the service. When the prospect of elevation had apparently vanished, instructions were suddenly issued requiring us, in the snows of mid-winter, to join in investing the strongly fortified town of Ciudad Rodrigo, within the Spanish confines.

For eleven days the troops labored incessantly, preparatory to the assault. Exercise and exposure to the atmosphere must have previously consolidated my bodily energies, else I should have sunk under the hardships I voluntarily braved. I was among the foremost of the party which stormed the redoubt on the great Teson, and in the duty of the trenches more than shared the fatigues and dangers of a common sentinel.

Two practicable breaches having been effected, arrangements were made for a nocturnal attack. After darkness had set in, on the 19th of January, we were in readiness. I obtained permission to join a band of three hundred men, destined to lead the assault of the lesser breach. Few of these could calculate on the sight of another sun. This was a source of encouragement to such as, like me, were destitute of pe-

cuniary or personal influence—adventurers for whom no honors bloomed, unless they were gathered from the grave.

Our brigade formed behind the Convent of St Francisco, almost on a line with the point of the defences to which our steps were to be directed. A moderate allowance of stimulating liquor had been dealt out to the men. I had provided a canteen of wine, to be reserved for a moment of exhaustion. Suspense added to the extreme sensation of cold; but so intensely were my faculties absorbed by the fearful business of the night, that of no cordials, however exhilarating, could I have swallowed a drop. I trembled, without the wish to draw back—and the few minutes immediately preceding the order to advance, were dilated into ages of anxiety. As to any effervescence of impatient courage intoxicated by the glory of the operations about to be commenced, it assuredly did not agitate my breast—nor, as far as I could form an opinion, did it constitute the solace of any other. Conscious that we oscillated between time and eternity, we longed to confront the worst, and to let events determine our reposing place.

Favored by the dreary shadows of a starless sky, we moved compactly and cautiously on,

unheralded by the sound of a careless footfall. We had proceeded so far in secrecy that it seemed probable we should gain the glacis undetected. At once the flash of cannon blazed upon our right, the prelude of a tremendous peal, which caused the earth to quiver beneath our feet. To this succeeded the cheers of our comrades, who, led by Colonel Campbell, had cleared the greater breach. Blue lights began to shoot their lurid fires far and near; we were unmasked to the deadly play of the artillery; every instant of delay teemed with destruction; forward!—forward!—was the feeling and the cry.

In perusing narratives of battles and sieges, by eye-witnesses, my surprise has been repeatedly excited by the self-possession of some of the narrators, who profess to detail the minutest particulars of every incident in the chaos of mortal controversy. My best recollections of these spectacles are gleamy and fragmentary, like the disjointed remembrance of a dream. From the opening volley to the shout of Victory, I can recall only patches of action, floating amid the smoke of the melee, like glimmerings of reality dawning through the vapors of a disordered brain.

It is thus I bring to mind the circumstances

attendant on the storming of the fortifications of Ciudad Rodrigo. At the first discharge of the enemy's guns, we who were to head the assault were propelled towards the point of attack by the whole force of the column in the rear. On we rushed in a tumultuous mass, while here and there our dense array was broken by the inroads of shot and shell. By what means I eventually topped the breach, earliest and unwounded, I know not; elsewhere I could not have contrived to be, unless I had slumbered with the slain. One scene of the dread drama is vividly before me.—In the glare of some combustibles, a French grenadiér covered me with his musket—a general officer, suddenly intervening, received the bullet in his arm. His fate would have been consummated by the assailant's bayonet, but for the rapidity with which I used my piece. I shot the man through the head: they yet haunt me—the quick convulsion of his grim features—the exclamation of his blasphemous 'O, sacre !' as he leaped upwards ere his senseless carcase measured the ground he had maintained with fidelity contemptuous of fear.

Success having crowned our endeavors, discipline was partially restored. My clothes imparted the feeling of being saturated with

blood. During a brief breathing-space, I examined into the cause. A ball had shattered the canteen; the wine deposited in it had oozed through my apparel. Thanking Providence for preservation, I dashed along the ramparts to the assistance of the troops at the larger breach. There we ascertained that the town was ours. Then succeeded sounds and sights of horror more dismal than ever burthened the tortured fancy of misanthropy.

Setting restraint at defiance, the soldiers impelled by the brutish frenzy created in minds destitute of moral courage when recently escaped from the perils of strife, gave a loose to the direst passions which crime and ignorance have pampered to emulate the fiends. Dispersed in parties of from four to thirty, they butchered the distracted stragglers of the flying garrison, plundered the houses of the unhappy citizens, ransacked their cellars, and effacing by intoxication the last vestiges of humanity, sallied forth, yelling and ravening like wild beasts—holding an infernal carnival of riot, burning, violation, and massacre.

Passing through a narrow street with two Scottish serjeants, I heard the shriek of a female. Looking up, we saw at an open lattice, by the light of a lamp she bore, a girl about

sixteen, her hair and dress disordered, the expression of her olive countenance marked by anguish and extreme terror. A savage in scarlet uniform dragged her backward, accompanying the act with the vilest execrations in English. We entered the court-yard, where the hand of rapine had spared us the necessity of forcing a passage. My companions were humane, conscientious men, with the resoluteness that in military life almost invariably accompanies these qualities. Armed for whatever might ensue, they kept steadily by me until we arrived at a sort of corridor, from the extremity of which issued the tones of the same feminine voice imploring mercy in the Spanish tongue. Springing forward, my foot slipped in a pool of blood. Before I could recover, the door of the apartment whither we were hurrying, opened, and two soldiers of my own company discharged their muskets at us, slightly wounding one of the gallant Scots. Intemperance had blinded the ruffians and frustrated their murderous intentions. We felled them to the ground, and penetrated into the chamber. There I had a hair-breadth escape from falling by the fury of another of the desperadoes. Parrying his bayonet, which he aimed at my breast, I could not prevent it

taking a less dangerous course, and lacerating my left cheek, nearly from the lip to the eye. The gash, though frightful, threatened no consequence more serious than an ugly scar. Surgical knowledge enabled me to perceive this, as well as to apply the remedies within reach.—It was a light matter compared to the accumulated wretchedness, visible around me.

The room wherein we stood had been devoted to the festivities of a retired family of moderate fortune. It contained the remnants of those decent elegancies that properly appertain to 'the stranger's' apartment in a dwelling of the middle class. Mutilated pictures; and fragments of expensive mirrors, strewn the floor, which was uncarpeted and formed of different kinds of wood, curiously tessellated. An ebony cabinet, doubtless a venerable heir-loom, had suffered as if from the stroke of a sledge. Its contents, consisting of household documents and touching domestic memorials, were scattered about at random. An antique side-board lay overturned; a torn *mantilla* drooped on a sofa ripped and stained with wine. The white drapery, on which fingers steeped in gore had left their traces, hung raggedly from the walls. Pinioning our prisoners, we barricaded the doors against intra-

sion, and proceeded to offer all the assistance and consolation in our power to the inmates of the desecrated mansion.

On investigation the serjeants found the dead body of a domestic, whose fusil and dagger showed that he had fought for the roof which covered him. His beard had been burned in derision with gunpowder. One of his ears was cut off and thrust into his mouth. In a garret recess for the storage of fruit, two female servants were hidden, who could scarcely be persuaded that they had nothing to fear. Having flown thither at the approach of the ferocious intruders, they had suffered neither injury nor insult. They came to the room where I lingered over an object unconscious, alas! of my commiseration, and in accents half choaked by sobs, called upon Donna Clara! I pointed to the alcove where the heart-broken lady had flung herself on the bleeding corpse of her gray-haired father. She, too, might have had a sheltering-place, could her filial piety have permitted her to remain there when her high-spirited sire feebly strove to repel the violators of his hearth.

Master of a few Spanish phrases, I used them in addressing some words of comfort to the ill-starred girl. They were to her as the

song of the summer-bird carolled to despair. Her sole return was a faintly recurring plaint, that seemed to say, 'Let my soul depart in peace!'

I motioned to her attendants to separate her from the beloved source of her 'unutterable sorrow. They could not comply without the application of force bordering upon violence. Bidding them desist, I signified a desire that they should procure some animating restorative. A flask of wine was brought. The sergeants withdrew. One of the women held the lamp; the other gently elevated her mistress's head. Kneeling by the couch in the alcove, I poured a little of the liquor into a glass, applied it to her lips—then took it away, until I had concealed my uniform beneath the torn *mantilla*.

Affliction, thou hast long been my yoke-fellow! Thou hast smitten to the core of my being with a frequent and a heavy hand: but I bless an all-wise, an all-merciful God, who tries that he may temper us, that I have not a second time been doomed to witness aught so crushing to the soul—so overwhelming in woe—as the situation of the young creature over whom I watched on the baleful midnight of our Victory!

She had battled with a might exceeding her sex's strength, against nameless indignities, and she bore the marks of the conflict. Her maidenly attire was rent into shapelessness; her brow was bruised and swollen; her abundant hair, almost preternaturally black, streamed wildly over her bosom, revealing in its interstices fresh waving streaks of crimson, which confirmed the tale of ultra-barbarian outrage; her cheek had borrowed the same fatal hue from the neck of her slaughtered parent, to whom, in her insensibility, she clung with 'love strong as death.' Daughter of Spain!—well was it for thy sire that he was gone from a polluted world—well was it for him to whom thou wouldst have flown in thy desolateness, that his place was filled by a stranger to his wounded dove—one who, though devoted as a brother, could better bear up under the bitter ministrations of that hour!

Through the means adopted, she gave token of revival. Her hand had retained a small gold cross, and she raised it to her lips. The clouded lids were slowly expanded from her large dark eyes. A low, agonizing moan followed. I hastened to present the wine. In the act, the *mantilla* fell from the arm which conveyed the glass. Appallingly she shrieked—became convulsed—passed from fit to fit—expired.

I called the serjeants.

'We are here,' they answered.

'Spurn those monsters, bound as they are, into the court-yard—remain in the house until morning—I must hence.

'It will be dangerous, Sir, to venture into the streets tonight—consider your wound.'

'It may be so—I wish it may—help me to clear the passage.— I do not feel a wound!'

I plunged into the darkness. The black ensigns of the Almighty's wrath were unfurled over the earth, of which all lovely and holy things had taken an eternal farewell, and resigned it to the dominion of demons. There was to be no future resurrection of the morning.—Thus spoke my tempestuous emotions. But morning came at last, and its gray eye saw me, like a shipwrecked mariner, pacing mournfully near the gate of St Jago.

CHAPTER XIV.

The capture of Ciudad Rodrigo was denominated 'a brilliant operation.' Of the contending parties at least two thousand perished ere the close of the siege. Many of the wounded died from exposure to the elements at an inclement season. Calamity was throned in funeral state upon the ramparts of the trembling city. It was for national gratitude to overbalance ills inseparable from warfare. Lord Wellington was created a Spanish grandee and an English earl. The British parliament added a yearly pension of £2000 to keep the titles in countenance. Of the humble instruments of his will, the survivors were made supremely happy by 'a vote of thanks.'

The daylight was very welcome after what I had seen and endured. I was threatened with serious illness from want of rest, loss of blood, and the effects of the night-damp. The troops, jaded by the headlong indulgence of debasing propensities, began to re-assemble around the standard of duty. I obtained a bed in an obscure house, and sent a note to

Rodney. What a luxury it was to lay my head upon a pillow!

I slept for sixteen hours, undisturbed as those who were lying unconscious in the breach. I mean physically quiescent, for the machinery of thought too readily resumed its activity, and troubled my repose with a confused repetition of late events. The din of the assault—that indescribable mingling of artillery, musketry, groans, shouts, and imprecations—swelled around me like a raging sea. The cheated sense was seared by the continual flaming of gunpowder, and the glaring of vengeful faces. The tumult of the brain announced the disorder of the body. I had need of a surgeon. The cut in my cheek was irritated, my temples throbbed with the strong pulsation of fever.

In the absence of medical assistance, I scrawled a prescription, directing my host to forward it to a vender of drugs. While awaiting the messenger, a British orderly entered the apartment. Inquiring my name, he presented General V——’s compliments, with the general’s anxious wishes to see me immediately at his quarters. I expressed much regret that the chances of war rendered me incapable of paying my respects to so distinguished an officer.

In less than an hour afterwards the door was lightly tapped. General V——, bearing his arm in a sling, and accompanied by a military surgeon, approached my bedside. He extended his left hand.

‘I cannot offer you the right hand, Mr Earnshaw,’ he said; ‘thanks to the tall Frenchman who but for you would have given me a more serious memento than a trifling flesh-wound. But I trust you will grant me the pleasure of furnishing a lodging better suited to your case. I wish to have you under my personal superintendence, if my friend the doctor will authorize your removal.’

I knew that he referred to our meeting in the storming-party, when fortune afforded the opportunity of saving his life. Making acknowledgments for the interest he was pleased to take in me, I begged to decline any testimony of gratitude originating in an interference purely accidental. The general, however, insisted on his right of reciprocity. The surgeon, being of opinion that I might be removed with safety, I assented to his request, and was conveyed to a comfortable residence, where I was tended with every care compatible with circumstances.

For above a fortnight I was confined to the

couch. During the greater part of the period my mind was unsettled. The kind old officer provided for me with the solicitude of a parent. He came regularly after the fever abated, to lighten the tedium of solitude by reporting the news of the day. The first occasion on which I quitted my chamber was to participate in his evening meal, he having a desire to converse with me on matters of importance.

On descending to the appointment, I found him bustling among papers, and dictating to a secretary. Arising from his seat, he saluted me with emphatic cordiality; then proceeded to complete the business before him, which he speedily despatched; and, taking my arm, passed into a cheerful little room, where a table was spread for supper. After some desultory inquiries and remarks, he remained silent and thoughtful for a considerable time. As he bent forward in the attitude natural to deliberation, the light fell upon his scattered and hoary locks, and broad indented brow. My heart warmed towards him with a glow almost filial. I marvelled by what singular fatality so patriarchal a form came to be enrolled among the apostles of carnage and ruin.

‘My young friend,’ he said, ‘before going further, let me premise to you, that I am a

plain straight-forward man—aware of your story, and disposed to serve you.’

I bowed.

‘Your mode of joining the army was a youthful imprudence. Among us a volunteer is a neglected nondescript; the odds against his promotion are a thousand to one—enough of that. There are three things essential to you in the Peninsula;—vigorous health, moderate funds, and a commission. To regain the first you must have quiet and change of scene; as to the second, though not very rich I can afford to be for the present your banker; with respect to the third, until we ascertain the success of an application already forwarded, you shall be classed and paid as a cadet.’

‘You are too good, sir’—I answered—‘the last assurance meets all my wants, and exceeds my expectations.’

‘No nonsense, boy!—no nonsense!—This purse contains a hundred guineas—take charge of it;—now, a glass of wine—I must to hammock betimes to recruit for an early morning. The works are repaired, a Spaniard appointed governor. Wellington will not let us rust in garrison. I march with my division tomorrow; you, when your strength permits, will cross the frontier, and retire as far from the

blast of the bugle as you can. No more fighting for months. How came you by that scar upon your cheek?"

I related the mode in which I had been wounded, and the tissue of atrocities with which the affair was connected.

He filled a goblet of wine and gulped it down.

'Should such incarnate devils,' I exclaimed, 'be suffered to live!'

He rang the bell—'Leave them to the French, my dear lad—Leave them to the French—What would you have us do?—Establish in each town we take an Old Bailey; turn the subalterns into finishers of the law, and string every tenth man? In no other way could we dispense equal justice. War presents a poisoned bowl, and this is one of its diabolical ingredients!'

A soldier waited the General's commands. 'I am for bed, Verner. Good-night, my young friend! I shall be mindful of your interests—good-night!'

We shook hands and parted. In passing through the outer chamber, I caught the reflection of my figure in a large mirror. But that my dress was proof positive of identity, I might have deemed myself the sport of opti-

cal deception. Sunken eyes, ghastly color, and the transverse cut which had seamed and contracted the skin of the cheek, gave me a cast of features grotesque and wo-begone; I looked like a plant shrivelled by an untimely frost. Addressing the spectre in the glass, I said, 'You are sorely altered, Robert!—and much do you need tranquillity; but whither, oh, whither! shall you go to find it!' A single division and a small body of calvary were distributed on the Agueda, for the security of the new conquest. The remainder of the army moved to Frenada, where Lord Wellington prepared for the siege of Badajoz. I stayed behind from inability to travel. Rodney went with his regiment. He neither called on me in the period of my illness, nor after my recovery; but enclosed a sum of money in a billet containing vague excuses and studied expressions of esteem. I returned the favor as unnecessary, with scrupulous acknowledgments of the liberality that had made me so often and so deeply his debtor.

The desire to impart a happy surprise to my friends had prevented me from corresponding with them since the day I sailed from Albion. I still procrastinated that act of duty from the expectation of being empowered to announce my appointment to an ensigncy.

In consequence of venturing abroad too soon, I brought on a second inflammatory attack, by which I was detained an additional month a prisoner within the city. During my convalescence, I became acquainted with a fellow soldier and sufferer whose name I had heard associated with anecdotes, which led me to form a preconception of him far from propitious to an amicable connection.

Fitzgibbon Daly was a captain in the—— regiment of foot; an Irishman, and a renowned duellist. He was reckoned an incomparable marksman. His nerves had been fortified by the numerous 'affairs' in which his coolness and address were signalized either as principal or second. From the sort of celebrity he had attained, he might have taken rank as a belligerent on his own account, levying petty war for his especial gratification. It proved an unprofitable pastime, having nearly expelled him from his profession and effectually barred his advancement. While known to me only by the description of his exploits, I always pictured him as a person who to the etiquettical emptiness of a coxcomb, added the murderous apathy of a buccaneer.

The duel—that mischievous remnant of feudal manners long denounced by the wisest and best—is falling into disrepute, though there are memorable instances to show the pertinacity with which Folly clings to whatever caters to its insatiable vanity. Over it the exalted philanthropy of religion wields no control. Its complacent insensibility is impenetrable to every weapon, save one which rarely fails in lancing even the callosity of a worldly bosom. Ridicule is the only effective instrument for bringing those to reason whose insane pride insists on submitting the distinctions of right and wrong to a mode of arbitrament so superlatively ridiculous as the ultimate appeal of modern honor.

Satisfaction must be offered or obtained for injury inflicted or received; what satisfaction? The chance of a pistol shot at ten or twelve paces. Are superior qualities developed by such an ordeal? Wherein does this blind periling of the person atone for the infraction of the ordinances of heaven, and the covenants of society?—Why waste words! To vindictiveness, inordinate self-love, or senseless passion the duel owes its origin and its continuance.

In a truly enlightened community, public opinion will be the peaceful conservator of public decorum. Every nation claiming to be

distinguished for real refinement, will supply the inefficiency of written law by doing spontaneous reverence to virtue, and discountenancing the slightest compromise of elevated feeling.

That state will merit the palm of pre-eminence in which goodness shall be held synonymous with fashion, and indifference to the happiness of others, deemed the characteristic type of barbarism. When the beauty of morals has become the subject of universal recognition, the audacious display of triumphant depravity will no more be tolerated than the presence of a wolf in the sheep-fold.

I had conceived the redoubtable Daly to be a person whose exterior corresponded to his reputation—a scowling bully, captiously observant of the institutes of quarrel. In this particular I was completely at fault. He was between forty and fifty years of age, extremely slight in figure, pale and spare of visage, totally free from the plebeian attributes of a Hector. In the poverty of his ideas, he rivalled my old friend and adviser, Radcliffe, whom he had met in Jamaica, and to my knowledge of whom I was indebted for our intimacy.

Recovering from a severe contusion on the knee, he, by the help of a great blackthorn staff, which he estimated beyond all price, as the un-

flinching partner of innumerable adventures, came frequently to see me. Though I did not enter keenly into the bent of his whimsicalities, they served to beguile the hour—the more so, as the Captain evinced a blunt sympathy for me, which wore at least the strongest outward signs of sincerity.

At nineteen he obtained a commission—in the vicissitudes of a military career, he was present in actions of note, in Europe, Asia, Africa and America. It might have been supposed that his conversation would, in consequence, have sparkled with instruction. Such an object, however, was foreign to the drift of his discourse.—His speculations were restricted to the racing calendar and the mysteries of dog-training: Duelling was a topic, the introduction of which he avoided. When I touched upon it, he shook his head with much solemnity, and reprobated the practice as highly unbecoming and absurd.

I asked him, how he contrived to reconcile precept and example?

He confessed that he had been 'out pritty often,' but in every instance there was no honorable alternative. His public spirit drew him into disputes with his commanding officers, in consequence of which his claims to promotion

had been neutralized: he might otherwise have been at the head of a regiment. This was a hardship—yet to obviate it was impossible. Wherever grievances existed, he was sure to be selected as their redressing representative; and would I have him, from cold and selfish considerations, turn his back upon a just cause?

‘Allowing the praise due to these disinterested endeavors,’ I rejoined, ‘still the majority of your quarrels must have been of a nature decidedly personal.’

‘Why it’s true enough—the majority, as you observe, have;—but how can I prevent it? Some people are niver asy without a botheration on their hands—and are in a hurry to say what they don’t like to unsay, and what a person of delicacy can’t put up with.—Now there was Gaskell, of our regiment;—you knew Gaskell?’

‘No.’

‘An excellent fellow and a capital shot—rode a steeple-chase like a Leicestershire squire. Well, it was in a town in the Alentejo—we were spaking of Prendergast’s pointer, and I remarked that he was a liver-colored dog; Gaskell gave me a flat contradiction.—‘I know the dog,’ says I, ‘and I pledge my honor to the fact.’—Gaskell repated his denial.—Job him-

self couldn't stand it! I sent him a message, immediately, and we met next morning at the vineyards.'

'Surely nothing serious was produced by so slight a misunderstanding?'

'A gentleman's word impached!—Do you call that slight? However, nothing serious followed; his ball whizzed past me—mine touched his elbow and fractured the bones a little: with this my friend expressed himself content. Gaskell lost his arm, and sailed for England. I was as sorry for him as if he had been my brother. He was a prime sportsman, and his heart was in the right place. You will perceive I had no wish for the thing.—What was to be done? I make it a point not to offend a babe;—but a soldier's honor, you know, must be above suspicion.—There would be few duels if every one was as fond of pace and quietness as Fitz Daly.'

I was rather sceptical of the Captain's pacific tendencies, but deemed it prudent to veil my incredulity in silence. During our intercourse, he favored me with frequent admonitions respecting the maintenance of a sagacious economy, and the mode of demeaning myself toward those who might be disposed to assume a 'troublesome bearing.'

His maxim was, that he who would ensure respect must be always ready for action. We left Ciudad Rodrigo together, and separated with something like regret; he to attend the opening of the trenches before Badajoz; I to re-establish a debilitated frame in the less turbulent district around Almeida.

CHAPTER XV.

He whose pulsations make the music of high health, though endowed with greater capacity to pervade the exhaustless pleasure-haunts which Nature has provided for her votaries, is not so exquisitely attuned to her rarest harmonies as is the emancipated captive of the sick bed. It seems to be an immutable and universal law of the presiding Intelligence, that as there is no temporal good wholly unalloyed by evil—so there shall be no out-pouring of affliction without its consolatory after-drops. The wrenching malady, that has all but forced the citadel of life, while it unfits the frame for braving the wrath of the elements, lays bare a fairy labyrinth to joyous sensation, in which the mystic voices, that murmur their faint hymns by brook and bower, wake echoes of responsive tenderness. Whatever is grateful to the material man, appears to participate in his renovation. The herbage wears a more refreshing verdure—the flowers exhale a more insinuating fragrance—the orbs, on which he settles his wistful eye at eventide, shine forth

less imperfect symbols of the Divinity. In him and around him reigns supreme the eternal principle of Love, elevating and beautifying all things—inducing to the tempered soul a sublime lowliness, borrowed from the abashed perception of the Almighty's attributes, and the cherished consciousness that, notwithstanding the multiplied aberrations from the direct line recognized by the blindest of Adam's posterity, the chastened offender may still assure himself of a sanctuary of peace and mercy, although every country on earth should withhold the common birth-right of the clay, and the door of his natal dwelling exclude him from the courtesies of a stranger.

A band of invalids courted the reviving breeze at a hamlet near Almeida, the position of a British post. Thither I repaired, and by a fortunate chance was admitted to the very residence I should have coveted.—The Convent of St Isidore was a place for a poet to live and a penitent to die.

The ancient pile stood upon an extended knoll, that rose, greenly graceful, between a lofty chain of umbrageous hills. Its site was distinguished by the richness of soil and sunniness of aspect which so frequently mark the topography of old monastic buildings. A river,

dividing at the upward extremity, formed a transparent girdle around, and, reuniting its branches, rendered the hallowed eminence inaccessible to the pedestrian, save by a weather-worn wooden bridge. This frail structure gained in picturesque effect what it lost in durability. Its worm-eaten images of angels and saints prepared the wayfarer for the pomp-excluding retirement of ascetic devotion. The entire area of the Conventual property might have been about ninety acres. Every patch was cultivated with the nicest care—in field, garden, and orchard, abounded luxuriant testimonials of fertility.

The brothers of St Isidore were twenty-four in number. Their little estate owed its flourishing appearance to their assiduous husbandry. Excepting this indication of activity, they were in few respects dissimilar to the rest of the cowed corporations that hive over Southern Europe. They averred a belief in a Deity—they honored the Virgin—they idolized St Isidore. Happy in crepuscular knowledge—their fervid vision glorying in the sanctified day-night which mellowed their pictured windows, they duly perambulated the ground of their narrow circle, telling their beads, and craving their beatifide patron's protection from

the artifices of Satan and the detestable glare of heretical illumination.

The chief of the community was more of a cosmopolite. He had read largely of the book of experience, and, report whispered, had inscribed therein certain passages, which his advanced age would have undergone much to obliterate. A soldier and a sensualist, he had, at forty, espoused the Church, gracing the act of profession by a benefaction, that, in the estimation of the Catholic hierarchy, went far to cover 'a multitude of sins.' I was the bearer of a letter to him, from a friend beyond the frontiers, and was invited, in consequence, to partake of the hospitalities of the Convent.

My light baggage was conveyed to St Isidore's, and through the good offices of father Jerome, the superintendant of the gardens, whose confidence I won by a discourse upon the sanative qualities of herbs, sustained in Latin worthy of the chroniclers of the tenth century, I was satisfactorily installed in an apartment, some ten feet by six, furnished with a chair, a bench, a mattress, and a crucifix. This was sleeping-room, parlor, and refectory. It was equal to my wants. The circulation of the veins acknowledged the

quickenings presence of the landscape, fresh and free; the sulphur-clouds of war floated into oblivion while loitering on the lap of blossoming April, I scanned the azure arch of heaven, or vaguely speculated upon its dazzling interchange of fugitive mosaic.

It is amazing how completely man remains in vassalage to his primitive impressions—morally, intellectually, physically. The first objects of experience garrison the strong hold of the mind—retaining possession until Death has demolished the outworks, and yielding reluctant ingress to ideas alien or adverse to themselves. The ethical inquirer who shall properly follow up and elucidate this subject, will sweep the dust from some of the most precious pearls in the coronet of Truth. I have pursued it so curiously, that, at times, I have almost been persuaded of the possibility of determining the color and cast of genius, by the rules and arrangements of the nursery.

My stay in the insulated convent, in a corner of the province of Beira, illustrated the force of prepossession. The adjacent scenery, especially in its finest points, was entirely different from Devon. There were two or three petty resemblances in details, and from the contemplation of these, I derived higher grati-

fication than from sights every way worthier. This exemplified the pupilage of the senses. The adhesive plasticity of the thinking principle was evidenced in a matter of involving a superior order of sentiment. The Church of Rome was, in our family, a standing theme for comments emanating from fear and aversion. This was altogether apart from hatred to its advocates, who were estimated by the universal and unerring standard of rectitude in practice. My father fully admitted, and devoutly respected, Catholic probity, while he unsparingly anathematized the Catholic faith. A Bishop or a Pope might have relied firmly upon his friendship, if, in the relations of life, the dignitary had proved himself strictly upright; but Prelacy and Popery, in the abstract, were to him, 'the abomination of desolation.' So often had they called forth his invective, that, in my childish vocabulary of personified terrors, they assumed a place scarcely subordinate to church-yard goblins. Antichrist, the Man of Sin—the Beast with seven heads and ten horns—and the Babylonian harlot, were the performers in a fiery pageant which I thoroughly dreaded, long before I could say why or wherefore.

I now adhere to a definite belief, opposed—

though I trust in charity—to the Romish persuasion. When sojourning at St Isidore's I was a Christian, according to the form of my forefathers—just as I was the representative of the ancestral name. Farther than a repugnance to genuflexion to the Host—in the streets an annoying ceremony—I had never bestowed a moment's consideration on the discrepancies, in doctrine and discipline, between the simple Presbyterian worship and the gorgeous ritual of the Peninsular creed. Whatever semblance there was of adhesion to precise and positive tenets, resulted less from a point of conscience than a point of honor. These circumstances warrant me in attributing to the silent operation of early example the prejudice I entertained against the ghostly brethren among whom I lingered, and the sensitive apprehension of proselytism which grew out of lukewarmness.

Suspicion misconstrued the sincerity of father Jerome's morning and evening benediction. When the zealous herbalist officiated as the servitor of my plain repast, however sensible of his kindness, I could have dispensed with the endearing epithet of 'son,' which he lavished upon me most profusely. His praises of the true Church, founded on a rock, against

which 'the gates of hell should not prevail,' were spent on air, as were not a few of the Gothic Latinisms, to which he resorted as an explanatory medium. 'The lamps, dimly illuminating the sculptured dead, in the gloom of the cloisters, served as a beacon against homage to graven images; the roll of the nocturnal anthem aroused the gaunt apparitions of the victims of inquisitorial cruelty; the very stillness that prevailed within the venerated walls, created an oppressive sense of awe—as if, passing the boundaries of the empire over which good spirits hold authority, I had entered upon a scene solemn and soothing, and wonderfully fair, but betraying to the gifted eye the unholy interference of supernatural agency.

I was above three weeks at the Convent, ere introduced into the presence of its superior. The little I had learned of his lay career made me solicitous to see him; all attempts to obtain an account of him from the monks were ineffectual. Their invariable answer to my inquiries was, as if by preconcerted argument, 'Father Francisco is a miracle of sanctity—praise be to the Virgin!'

The benignant fingers of May had showered abroad her balmy dews, and soul-delighting flower tints. Trees fretted with the wrin-

kles of fifty winters,germinated as in the sprightliness of youth. Participating in the universal regeneration, my frame thrilled to the kindly current of vitality, and in the developement of its wonted powers, gave the assurance of fitness for the resumption of relinquished duties. Like a careless schoolboy I was admiring the tropical bloom of some Brazilian plants, when intimation was brought that my presence was requested by the chief of the establishment.

By a dark-turret stair I was conducted into a spacious chamber, seemingly intended both for a library and an oratory. It was lighted by a lofty window of stained glass. Vellum-bound books filled the shelves of mahogany repositories, overlaid with sumptuous carving by a skillful hand.

Paintings of sacred subjects, by the first masters, shrouded their beauties in the principal compartments of the sombre wainscotting. Within a few feet of the window a massive silver crucifix flanked by two large wax tapers, gleamed on an altar covered with black cloth.

I remained here until the return of the attendant monk, who glided through an obscure passage to announce my coming. He beckoned me towards him, and pointing to a door, which, slightly ajar, was distinguishable by a stray

glimmering of light, whispered me to proceed.

The apartment I entered was sacred to the Prior's seclusion. The air of convenient elegance pervading it, warranted the surmise that its occupant had still a latent partiality for the vanities of a transitory sphere. In length it embraced the whole latitude of the convent. At one extremity there was a magnificent window representing Raphael's transfiguration, at the other, a lattice, in character with the climate. The floor was of black marble. Three small tables, formed of slabs of the same materials poised upon ebony, presented each a very different aspect to the observer. On the first, which fronted the Prior, were a human skull, an hour-glass, a Missal, and a small gold box. That in the centre was furnished with a wine-flask, a crystal goblet, and fruits, foreign and native. The third sustained a rusty sabre, and the faded decorations of a military order. The walls and ceiling were encrusted with reliefs commemorative of events recorded in Catholic legends. A solitary picture occupied a conspicuous place. It was a Magdalen by Guido—lovely as woman's countenance can be where sin and sorrow have left their mournful traces.

Father Francisco, attired in the coarse apparel of his order, reclined upon a black velvet ot-

toman. A silken cap, also of sable hue, circled the centre of his shaven crown. Tall, spare, and finely featured, his cadaverous paleness was heightened by the oriental blackness of his eyelashes and brows. The lineaments of his face bespoke a man in whom passion had anticipated the work of time.

He saluted me in English, and without altering his recumbent posture, begged me to be seated. Illness, he said, had prevented him from acknowledging my polite attention in forwarding the communication of a valued friend; still in its relentless gripe, he had to crave indulgence for a style of entertainment novel to a soldier.

His tones were soft and plaintive as the swell of an *Æolian* lyre; they agitated me unaccountably. To support the conversation, I mentioned my approaching departure, the sense I entertained of the reception at St Isidore's, and my wish to learn whether there were any mode of testifying the latter by deed.

He drew the gold box from the adjoining table, tremblingly opened it, and taking out a drug which I knew to be opium, inserted in his mouth a quantity not less in size than a filbert.

‘I shall be better presently,’ he said.

‘There is wine—I pray you, pledge me after the fashion of your country.’

He closed his eyelids, and was silent. At the expiration of about twenty minutes he raised himself upright, and began to converse energetically.

I complimented him on his attainments in the English language, and inquired if he had ever visited Britain.

‘Two years,’ he replied ‘two of the most worthless years of a worthless existence I spent in London. Among the noblest in your land, there are yet, perhaps, some who would feel an interest in the name I once bore—a name, the stains of which a flood of repentant tears will hardly purify. That tarnished weapon, and that paltry toy beside it, are preserved as monitors to the urgent work of atonement. They declare the evil which hath been done. This precious volume, this remnant of mortality, and the warning glass that metes out the moments faithfully however we abuse them, urge to the good which ought to be—and is not!’

He paused, crossed himself, and murmured a prayer. ‘You spoke of returning to the field.’

‘I have no alternative.’

‘Youth can perceive none where its wishes

shape their precipitate course. I could point out many. I have fluttered in the hall of audience—have led squadrons to the charge—have been the ephemeral deity of Parisian saloons—Josephine Beauharnois called me friend. In the stateliest circles of Europe I was initiated into the refinements of crime—ay, of crime. Such have I been. I am now the head of a spiritual household—the brother in the Lord of humble pious men; ambitious of nought but a crown of righteousness; fearful of nought but the meed of an iniquitous career. Mother of the Merciful, thou dost intercede for me ! Surely thou wilt extend to the worst of sinners the arms of thy love ! *Sancta Maria, miserere mei !*

From the pages of the Missal he drew a miniature Madonna, such as *connoisseurs* would consider a diamond of art, and pressed it with empassioned but reverent devotion to his lips. The stimulating power of the narcotic burned in his eyes, which he fixed upon me so ardently that mine cowered beneath them.

‘You call yourself a Christian,’ he said.

‘I was trained in the principles of Christianity, and confide in their truth.’

‘Yes, a Christian of Saxony or Geneva—icy,

obstinate, presumptuous. There is unity in the Godhead—there must be unity in the Church. Renounce the heresies of a rebellious sect, accept salvation, or let eternity pronounce thee lost !’

Paralyzed by the father’s excited manner, and wild and abrupt appeal, I abstained from reply. He continued:

‘ A vision foretold to me your coming; last night a second vision counselled me to snatch thee from perdition. Forsake the schismatic worshippers—withdraw your footsteps from the path of blood. In this abode of the faithful, cultivate the peace which passeth all understanding; so that when death overshadows thee with his dusky pinions, thou mayest fall asleep near the tomb of him who thus supplicates thee, while timbrel, harp, and psaltery, and the inconceivable harmonies of the celestial choir, welcome a liberated spirit to the mansions of bliss.

‘ Although I were to become a proselyte, there are friends in England to whom I must return.’ ‘ Friends!—already have they been forsaken at the beck of folly; and severed be the ties of kindred when they would fetter us to ruin! Who was it that said, ‘ Leave father and mother, and follow me?’ Avow thyself

ours, and thou shalt be the son of my soul. Promise at least to tarry within our walls until thy sight shall be enlightened.'

'Within three days, reverend father, I am bound to enter Almeida.'

'Then the Lord has resigned his share in thee, as do I, his servant!'

The tolling of a bell, followed by the pealing of an organ, sounded as if in symphony with the Prior's anthem-like accents. My attention was for an instant withdrawn from him. It was recalled by the rustling of drapery, and a hasty tread. The shutting of the secret door told that I was alone.

The friar by whom I had been escorted thither reappeared, and reconducted me to the gardens. I was perplexed on recapitulating the singularities of this interview, with a being of feelings, thoughts, and habits, so strangely compounded. From what had passed, I deduced the propriety of accelerating the moment of departure. I packed up my stock of equipments, and engaged the services of a pair of mules, and their owner, a tenant of the brotherhood, for the ensuing day.

CHAPTER XVI.

To avoid travelling in the noontide heat, I left the Convent at sunrise. My progress through the valley was voluntarily slow. The heavens were propitious to a last, long look; the hill-sides were arrayed in the bridal dress of morning. From the bridge I took a parting survey; Perez, the muleteer, plodded on, after paying a devout tribute to the timber saints which crowned its parapet.

In a place like St Isidore's I could not have imagined that contentment could fail to come at the call. The local genius seemed whispering that 'the banner over it was love,' and offering a silent invitation to him who wished to fly the world as well as to him who feared to enter it. It spoke of rest here, felicity hereafter. Deceitful are the solacing conclusions drawn from external beauty, animate or inanimate. The organs that serve as the interpreters of matter, are speedily sated; and the unquiet soul shadows forth its immortal destiny by straining to obtain, through the fragmentary glory of the golden-shored cloud-islands, a glimpse of the

transcendent empire, of which whatever the terrestrial eye pronounces good is but dimly symbolical. Happiness has not selected faultless features for her mask, nor a fairy landscape for her home. She refuses to be incorporated with the finest formations of the clod. A brief trial convinced me that I erred in expecting to meet her within the bounds of St Isidore's. A small community, barred by indissoluble bonds from the perils or, profits of secular anxieties, professedly devoted to the contemplation of eternity, encompassed by all that lends grace and dignity to solitude—were, alas! even as others, in the traits which distinguish the imperfect inhabitants of a transitory sphere. Their leader, who should have been a bright example of the elevating operation of religion on the self-prostrated spirit, was besotted by a vile drug, and crushed beneath the night-mare of an ill-spent life. To his retreat might have been applied a description by a living northern Poet—a minstrel who has walked in favored fellowship with the genii of woods, vales, rocks, and waters, from his earliest youth:—

‘The streamlet flows
Round and all round that sweet peninsula,
Bathing the low holms in undying green,

Where the slow cattle feed; or needful grain,
Greener than greenest herbage, soothes the eye
And heart together, promising to man,
Who prays for it to God, his daily bread.
Yet sorrow visiteth this world of sin
In the most peaceful places!

The general voice of Europe has, 'not without cause,' become unfriendly to monastic institutions. An unanswerable argument against them is furnished by the condition of the countries where they continue to exercise their power. The political compact of Spain, Portugal, and the Roman States, is the protection and perpetuation of mendicity. Whoever derives subsistence from the public stores, without directly and adequately contributing to the common interests of society, can only be rated as a beggar, be he prelate or grandee, dervise or bashaw. The evils of devotional seclusion are exemplified in the quarter of the globe whence the custom came. The East has been the exhaustless magazine of orders and observances. Brahmins and Bonzes had their colleges ages anterior to the existence of monks and caloyers. No wonder that government and despotism have been identified in the oriental nomenclature, when the porch of

the pagoda is ever open to admit, and ready to retain, in supine indulgence, the depositories of tradition, the arbiters of conduct, and dictators of opinion. There are vast sections of Asia where the present abasement of the people displays the unaltered picture of twenty centuries. The privileges of a class who monopolize the abstract avocations of mind have been preserved inviolate, that arbitrary authority might have the subject metal fused by cunning craftsmen, and ready to be moulded to its purposes. These reflections are a deviation from the onward bent of the narrative, but they will hardly be deemed inappropriate by him who has witnessed the abject state of the noble provinces that extend from Lisbon to the Pyrenean Mountains.

Ere resuming the story of an individual let me devote another remark to the species. While philosophers, in esoteric confidence, antedate the earth's majority far beyond the popular æra, philanthropy, guided by the non-adoption of its precepts, would willingly restrict it within a still narrower compass. The memorials of all empires, from the reign of Egyptian Menes to the exile of Napoleon, chronicle the same phenomena of advancement and decline—conquest, anarchy, monarchy, luxury,

ruin. The cause of this is involved in the fact, that among the registered solemnities of state, the coronation of Knowledge and of Virtue is yet unrecorded. The blind and the sordid mock the pretensions of the patient pair, and brand their adherents with epithets which folly loves to echo. But amidst much darkness, belted by fearful wastes, surrounded by enemies that wist not what they do—rises a star-like signal flame, acknowledged by the hum of awakening nations, hailed by a growing company of banded brothers as the sacred gathering point whence shall be proclaimed, once and for aye, the commencement of a united, holy, and enduring sovereignty. Men will not always passively admit the sophism that their froward natures demand and sanction iniquitous rule. Aware that opulence is rarely arraigned on charges of petty spoliation; that indigence is seldom taxed with arrogance, ostentation, voluptuousness, or the fosterage of sycophancy; they will learn to generalize these axioms in morals, and establish a system as luminous and firm as the elements of geometrical science. The most determined scoffers at the improvement of 'the mass' plead no lack of the germs of excellence in themselves for any process or period of melioration. They will even

grant that 'a few' of woman born might border on perfection. Here their step is stayed. Forgetful that what is applicable to some may be applicable to all, that the descent of one apple illustrated the regulating principle of tangible existence, they shake the sceptical head over a world of their equals, declaim against the ferocity of the persecuted savage, and unfolding to the wind the squalid habiliments of want and woe, invoke, with shameful irony, the righteous advocates of universal benevolence to behold the purity and majesty of the multitude. There is no surer mode of perpetuating the evils of a low standard of action, than to declare a higher unattainable.

The route to Almeida was unproductive of incident. At noon, I ordered the commissariat to partake of a *bivouac* under some evergreen oaks which flung their broad shadows over the grassy margin of a sainted well. The contents of my haversack, consisting of dried fruit, bread, a cold capon and light wine, added to water, clear and chill, furnished an unexceptionable repast. Perez was by no means indifferent to the pleasures of the napkin—table I cannot say, —although provided by heretical influence. He consumed the fare with a pastoral appetite, and I profited by his example. The mules, eased of their load, were permitted to crop the

adjacent herbage, while we addressed ourselves to the *siesta*. The 'long drawn breath' of my guide soon showed the superior aptitude of the rude frame of toil for the sweets of rest. Hopes, fears, regrets, that visit us unbidden, kept me waking.—After a halt of two or three hours, we remounted, and gained a British post about even-song. There I spent the night, and the next day reached the fortress.

In the interval, from the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo, our army had captured Badajoz and Almaraz. The influx of provisions and the munitions of war into Almeida, indicated that an enterprise of consequence was meditated in that quarter. The preparations were unrelaxed until nearly the middle of June, when Lord Wellington, taking the field against Marmont, advanced towards Salamanca. Close upon this event came my appointment to an ensigncy, in a regiment on the Agueda. The corps to which I was nominated was the same that claimed the services of Captain Fitzgibbon Daly.

A sketch of the occurrences of the two succeeding months would comprehend an enumeration of military movements, many and complicated. Without any distinct notion of the commanding purpose, we made feints, retreats,

advances—crossed rivers—assaulted forts—skirmished—fought a pitched battle, and relieved the guards to whose protection King Joseph left Madrid. During this period, powder and steel did loyal execution. Trooper and grenadier merited their daily stipend. Besides an ‘imposing’ list of subordinate affrays, the field of Salamanca alone contributed above twenty thousand, killed and wounded, to the registers of destruction. The minor departments—plunder, burning, and assassination—were not neglected. Whatever omissions might have resulted from the more mechanical operations of the regular levies, were compensated by the midnight expeditions of the infuriated and merciless Guerillas.—These transactions form the favorite provision of History’s vulgar banquet. Let her ruminate and digest them.

While public affairs prospered on this grand scale, my personal adventures were as uninteresting as camp monotony could make them. There was little leisure for noticing the peculiarities of scenery, and scanty opportunity of estimating national manners. Ceaseless labor and anxiety caused us to rejoice in the prospect of an engagement, as a step toward the termination of our toils. When existence offers nought but gall to its possessor, Death ceases to pre-

side upon a tribunal of terror. On several occasions, we were worn and chafed into regardlessness of danger, and rather sought than shunned it. It was written that I should pass unharmed through the fire. A slight sabre-cut above the right eyebrow was the sole token I bore of encounters, which proved fatal to numbers whose well-directed efforts might have been a permanent blessing to their country.

I was present at a ceremony after the battle of Salamanca, an account of which never appeared in the Gazette. It was the ceremony of burying the dead,—an observance enforced by a principle not less cogent than the antisocial rules of the tactician. The trappings of 'the brave' had afforded a rich harvest to those servitors of slaughter who come, with the vulture, when the feast is over, to gather the crumbs which have fallen from the board of blood. Standing near a huge pit, hastily excavated by the pioneers, I watched the frequent vehicles as they ejected their loads of mortality into the promiscuous sepulchre. The young and the old—the proud and the humble—the fair-skinned Briton—the olive-tinted Gaul—the browner sons of the 'Tajo and the Po—the athletic spearmen of the Vistula—met, and mingled, and exchanged a rigid but

lasting embrace in the crowded precincts of an unconsecrated tabernacle. A fair-haired form, whose symmetry the bolt of death had forborne to violate, tasking the patience of the grumbling sextons, was literally shovelled into the heap.—And that mutilated image of the Eternal, thought I, haply mirrored the smiles of an enraptured mother ! When the trumpet pealed in the streets, she may have sped often and often to the lattice to re-illumine, in the lustre of her boy's eloquent features, the gloomy chambers of a widowed heart. As his ready hand reined the caparisoned charger, in front of her dwelling, her bosom has bounded in equal measure to his dancing plumes. When the people shouted, in giddy gratulation, she has veiled the rosy suffusion of parental delight as she felt the share she claimed in the festal pageant. Perhaps, while I moralized, she was pouring the balm of hope into the ear of his betrothed.—O, thou twice-bercaved matron, couldst thou have beheld the rites by which Glory consummated her union with thy darling, thou wouldst, with thy latest breath, have banned the enchantress, and deplored the vanity that was bewildered by her allurements !

· In the chaos of action and legislation, of

theory, practice, and precept, it would be difficult to calculate the current value of a living soul. To show the difficulty, it is unnecessary to step beyond the bounds of the most civilized states of Europe; England herself will supply the requisite materials.

In England religion and the law have been pronounced one and indivisible—they are presumed to go hand in hand, in promulgating and enforcing those sacred decrees among which is included the solemn injunction, 'Thou shalt not kill.' The disposition to visit the rightful consequences of its infringement upon individual offenders is indisputable. It is also indisputable that while the full penalty is exacted for the dark and illicit use of lethal weapons, the wholesale abridgment of life is openly avowed, abetted, chartered.

Wars of cumbrous aggrandizement have ended in producing the erection of a hundred palaces on the ruins of ten thousand cottages. While the fingers of Commerce transmute corn into gold, the husbandman pines for bread. If the laborer perish for lack of hire, can they be exculpated who have undertaken to provide for the general good? If starvation madly anticipate the hour of dissolution,

should the ignominy of the deed rest with the victim, or with the system that was, however remotely, the impelling cause? Let it be inscribed upon the rock with a pencil of iron, that the worth of a government may always be inferred from the state of public morality. The fruits of the affections not less than the weight of the criminal calendar are a leading test of the soundness of a commonwealth. Even in countries where suicidal sacrifices are offered to superstition, he is but a shallow observer who does not discern among the devotees the presence of a sterner spur than mere fanaticism.—When has a fortunate prince submitted his body to the car of an idol?—After the soldier and the tax-gatherer have left the martyr of misrule on the salt shores of misery, the hope of absorption into a boundless ocean of beatitude shines the rainbow of the wave which is to obliterate for ever the memory of his woes. The curse of caste is not limited to India, else we had long since repudiated the monstrous fact that beneath the banner of liberty our common parent perpetrates the iniquities of despotism, and glutted with wealth, even to repletion, laments the burden of her children when they cry to her for succor. An effective change cannot ar-

rive until we refuse to be governed by our vices—until political delinquency shall cease to be considered the venial consequent of office—until the business of state, like the affairs of an exemplary household, shall be conducted upon universal and immutable principles of right, tolerant of no obliquity, cognizant of no accidental distinction. When the maturity of knowledge wills the commencement of this era, it shall be manifest to the families of the globe, that the Creator was all-bountiful—but man unjust. Our spiritual guides will then be more becomingly employed than in speculating how large a crop of immortality the earth is able to sustain, or in computing how many blades of wheat amount to a justification of wedlock.

CHAPTER XVII.

The victors of Salamanca passed, unopposed, over the Guadarama mountains, whose lofty summits vary the sameness of the prospect to the north-west of Madrid. On the plain, the French cavalry offered a partial and unavailing resistance. We entered the city by the gate of Segovia, the day after it was vacated by Joseph Bonaparte.

A residence of nearly three months in the Spanish capital presented facilities for examining whatever was remarkable in the place or its people. The dominant sentiment of the nation was everywhere, and in everything, the arch-peculiarity of the metropolis. The levity of the invaders had scarcely rippled the current of hereditary opinion, which swelled into greater volume on their expulsion. When, in the street of Alcala, the Castilians greeted us with crowns of laurel and deafening *vivas*, the scene recalled descriptions of the processional entrance of a triumphant army into Athens. As with the Greeks, emblems of deity were paraded, though invested with an un-

classical costume. Madonnas and babes—figures of celestial intelligences—the images of ‘just men made perfect,’ instead of the divinities of the Pantheon, were endlessly multiplied, in wood, wax, paper, confectionary, and stone. The secret of Spanish degradation shone revealed. The Dominican banner had risen above the tombs of the bold expostulators who curbed the sway of Charles the Fifth. A faith modified to the senses in all their phases—in suffering and pleasure—in anguish and extacy—in moral abstinence and carnal indulgence, of which the monarch was of necessity the sovereign pontiff—constituted an autocracy firm-rooted and overwhelming.

During our occupation of Madrid, we had the benefit of real relaxation from the sorrows and inconveniences of campaigning. Music and dancing gladdened ears and eyes hitherto inured to the clamor of distress and the confusion of retreat. Our regiment established a mess, on a system which its highest gastronomic authorities pronounced equal to home-quarters. The field officers took equestrian exercise on the banks of the Manzanares—the subalterns lounged in pairs on the Prado—the non-commissioned and privates held pan-

tomimic discourse with the chocolate-women and fruit-girls.

I joined the corps at too busy a season to have acquired a knowledge of the parties with whom I was associated. Fitzgibbon Daly had been barely able to steal time for a momentary congratulation during a period of weeks. After our civic domiciliation, he resumed his original character of Mentor, and introduced me, with the forms of friendly freemasonry, to those among our brethren whom he delighted to honor.

The individuals to whom I thus came, as they phrased it, 'regularly endorsed,' were as frank and obliging as in our respective relations could be desired. It was obvious that Daly was the oracle of his juniors;—the Chevalier Bayard, of the —th foot. Their *interpoculary* conversations seldom terminated without a discussion of some intricate point in the etiquette of 'gentlemanly satisfaction.' The captain was the judge of appeal—and, in winding up his decisions, sedulously labored to prove himself the patron of concord. 'Such,' said this casuist of combat, 'such is the usual and received thing,—it was the course I followed, in 1805, as the friend of Compton;—but, after all, you may take the word of one who

has seen through his follies—that, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, explanations begin and end in a manner the most preposterous. To be sure, a gentleman cannot submit to any braich of the urbanities—to derogatory insinuations; but, nivertheless, I feel bound to uphold the opinion, with which I started, as to the general question.’ Notwithstanding undivided acquiescence in his admonitory remarks, it was manifest that my Hibernian counsellor and his admirers were steady disciplinarians on the duelling code.

The bulk of the army was withdrawn from Madrid on the first of September. Two divisions, of which our brigade was a part, were left in garrison. The troops, under General Hill, moved to Aranjuez. In October, when Soult and Jourdan threatened the capital, they were stationed in position to protect it. Curiosity drew numbers of the officers on excursions from the camp to the city.

On an evening, at this time, Daly and I went to the Prince’s Theatre. The interior of the building, in accordance with Spanish taste, bore a resemblance to a church, of which the *aposenos*, or boxes, where we took our places, might have been considered the pews. The entertainments consisted of *saynetes*, short comic

pieces. At the conclusion of the first, several British officers made their appearance in the *gradas*, or benches. There was something in the air of one of them that seemed to me familiar. The house was too feebly lighted to allow me to verify the impression. My companion agreed to a change of seat, from motives similar to mine. Approaching within a little distance of the group, I distinguished, among unknown or doubtful faces, two, in which I could not have been mistaken,—those of Peel and Rodney.

There are few who would not have been gratified, as I was, at an accidental meeting with a youthful friend, on a mirthful occasion, when there were many probabilities against such a rencontre. The memory of our school-boy days would alone have rendered it delightful. Estrangement was effaced beneath the flow of re-awakened fondness. I pointed him out to Daly, as a person for whom I had the deepest regard, and burned with impatience to enjoy a mutual communication of ‘moving accidents by flood and field.’

After vain attempts to arrest his glance, I profited by a break in the performance, and, leaning over the partition which divided us, whispered his name, and held forth my hand. As

he looked at me inquiringly, I added,—‘ Robert Earnshaw.’ He inserted two fingers in my proffered palm—a style of manual acknowledgment not very enlivening. A faint smile and a momentary elevation of the eyebrows, indicated the extent of his pleasure and astonishment. Reflecting that a theatre was ill-suited to cordial demonstrations of friendship, I intimated that I should watch his departure for the purpose of joining him. He bowed an assent, and I resumed my seat.

When the piece verged to a close, Rodney’s party retired. The Captain and I followed immediately. Our expedition accomplished nothing; Frank was nowhere to be seen. Daly interrupted my conjectures as to the cause.

‘ Excuse me, Earnshaw,’ he said, ‘ but raily this seems to be what Irish sportsmen call a ‘ cowld trail.’ Take my word for it, the Senor De Rodney has other fish to fry besides playing the good fellow with our noble selves. It’s a folly to fret.—Come with me to Arnaboldi’s Italian *Fonda*, where we are sure to find the best substitutes for the absent—an eatable supper and drinkable wines.’

More chagrined than I cared to express, I passively submitted to be led to the tavern. After supper, my companion insisted that the

bottle should not be denied until I had ‘doubled Dull-man’s Cape.’ I drank a considerable quantity without being sensibly affected. The liquor wrought no change whatever upon the seasoned Irishman, except that it thickened his powers of speech and lengthened his anecdotes.

‘I’ll tell you what, green Earn,’ said he, ‘or rather blue Earn—for you are getting mighty unsocial and humdrumish—I have aschame.—Have you been to the *Botellerias*?’

‘No.’

‘Then off we go.—Don’t be alarmed—they are innocent lemonade cellars—quite spotless, I assure you. We shall hear firstrate music—sackbut, and dulcimer, and all the rest. You can be as sentimental as you like.—Will you or nill you?’

‘For half an hour I have no objection.’

‘Then let us cut stick.’

The lemonade cellars of Madrid are far from being the humble places of entertainment that might be expected from the name. They are fashionable, showy, and expensive. Exclusive of the prominent commodity, they are provided with ices, foreign liquors, and luxuries of various kinds. All have music—some have gaming-tables. Of the latter class was that to which I was conducted.

We entered an apartment gaily lighted and fantastically decorated. Knots of citizens were chatting over sweetmeats and cordial waters. The Captain summoned an attendant, to whom he made a secret communication. The man obsequiously ushered us through several rooms similar to the first. At the end of a gloomy passage, a folding door admitted us into the divan, where were held the sleepless counsels of that order of spirits who call it pastime to surrender the heart to the fangs of viperous passions—to unslakeable avarice—festering envy—withering anxiety—and fathomless despair.

Among the spectators of a *Rouge-et-Noir* table, were Rodney and his party. Peel, having observed me, spoke aside to Frank, who, shrugging his shoulders, reverted to the game. He had been betting unsuccessfully, and was trying to redeem his losses by doubling the stakes. His luck was as before. He veered from red to black and from black to red, but whenever he backed a color the cards were sure to exhibit its opponent.—Fretted by this controversy with Fortune, he threw down a large sum, and seeing it likewise swallowed up, turned on his heel and retired from the table.

I singled him out.—‘We have met twice unexpectedly tonight.’

‘ Ah, yes !—I am so forgetful.—By Jove ! your face has passed into a second edition, embellished with cuts, by eminent French artists.—I am not sure that you are yourself !’

‘ At all events, my feelings have undergone no change. I would rather have found you elsewhere, and otherwise employed.’

‘ We happen both to have come hither, however;—for my amusements, I account to nobody but the chaplain.—Who is that talking to Delancy—the young officer on your right?’

‘ An acquaintance—Captain Daly.’

‘ Irish Daly—the crack shot?’

‘ The same.’

‘ Bring us together—will you?’

‘ With pleasure.’

Introducing Rodney to the Captain, we joined in a general circle. Various modes of crowning the night were proposed and rejected. A majority decided for wine, cards, and adjournment to a private room. Orders were issued accordingly.

Peel and Rodney played partners at a card-table against Daly and Delancy. The others resorted to the lighter dissipation of a *bagatelle* board. I contented myself as a ‘looker-on.’

The bottle made frequent revolutions, especially round the card-table. There the in-

terest thickened—the skill of the players on each side being nearly equal—and the success reciprocal. As their animation increased, the stakes were augmented.

Wine and a sanguine temper occasionally clouded Frank's judgement. The instances of his precipitancy were not lessened by Peel's phlegmatic sarcasms. The tide of chance eventually deserted them. Rodney committed two or three glaring blunders, which he was unwilling to admit. Matters were referred to me, and I was obliged to arbitrate against him. He bit his lip and renewed his glass.

'Your ace is forfeited, Mr Rodney,' said Daly, 'it should have appeared before.'

'Pardon me, captain, I was true to suit.'

'To your impression I defer; but the fact is with me: consult the cards.'

Rodney's impetuosity had so confused the memorials of the game that the point, after examination, was still at issue. I was standing behind him, and had noted the alleged negation.

'You observed the second trick, Earnshaw?' said the Captain.

I nodded an affirmative.

'Was the card, tabled by this gentleman, a diamond?'

‘ You’ll give me leave to remark, Captain Daly,’ said Peel, ‘ that your interrogatories are not quite in etiquette.’

‘ Always happy, sir, to hear new readings of Hoyle. I ask my friend’s opinion for my personal gratification. Was the card a diamond, or was it not?’

‘ I believe Mr Rodney played a heart by mistake.’

‘ Then the question is at rest.’

‘ It is not, by—!’ cried Frank. ‘ I have no faith in his assertions, and shall dispense with his supervision!’

The matter and manner of this speech electrified me—as it did the whole party, with the exception of Peel. There was a silence of some minutes. Daly threw up his hand, and resigned the game. I grasped my sword-hilt—took a rapid turn through the room—prepared to speak—paused.

‘ Let me have a word with you, comrade,’ said the Captain, leading me into an adjoining apartment.

‘ Little said is asiest mended.—This *caballero* must be brought to *raison*, *secundem artem*.—Will you trust to my experience?’

‘ Were he of my own flesh and blood, I could not bear it!—Instantly demand—’

‘Ample apology, or satisfaction.—’They are intelligible alternatives—and there shall be no evasion. Keep your ground here for half an hour.’

He re-appeared about the specified time.

‘Earnshaw, it’s all arranged.’

‘Well, what has he done?’

‘He gives us the meeting two hours hence, at the *Buen Retiro*. Peel is to find him the *matériel*. I’ll post for a brace of assistants, long tried, and niver found wanting. Take a short nap on the sofa, or you may as well scribble any loose memoranda. I’ll attend to them in case of the worst. Day will soon dawn, so *carpe noctem*.’

It is singular, but I did fall into a doze shortly after he withdrew. It was heavy and unsettled, like a laudanum slumber, which pinions the senses instead of lulling them. From wine vapors, and the fumes of passion, arose a hateful—a most hateful dream. I was a guest at the board of the commander-in-chief, who had concentrated the army’s distinguished ornaments for unrestrained festivity. A toast had been appropriated to me, and I had fixed attention to its announcement, when arrested by Peel’s malevolent laugh. Looking around, I saw a drunken figure staggering towards me, which,

as it neared, showed through the weeds of reckless indigence the lineaments of my father. It reviled—buffeted me. Be the loathsome fantasy eternally forgotten!—its revival verges on filial impiety.

‘I have allowed you the latest minute,’ said Daly, arousing me, and inspecting his watch; ‘the calash waits.’

I went forth like an automaton, and the vehicle drove off. The morning air bit ‘shrewdly.’ Ruddy light was timidly breaking into a few faint blossoms. Convent, church, and palace, invested with the solemnity of a universal Sabbath, wore the aspect of majestic monitors. The mists floated from my brain. I revolved the events of the night—the theatre—the Fonda—the *Botelleria*—the insult, and its consequences.

‘I wish our *calesero* would bestir his old hacks,’ said the captain; ‘the matin-bell will call the people to mass directly.’

‘I do not like this business, Captain Daly,’ said I.

‘Nor I, by St Peter!—but come what will, as Christian gentlemen, we stand free of blame. The offence was given—apology, at laist, a sufficient apology, refused—the rest is theirs, not ours.’

‘And am I actually going to fight, because of the intemperate expression of a headstrong young man—about an idle petulancy, the froth of the cup?’

The captain stared me full in the face. His practice as a physiognomist showed him the injustice of a rising suspicion. He made no reply. I continued—

‘Some would perhaps think it wisest to disguise their feelings on such an occasion. They fear the reflections of others. I dread my own. Let me ask, once for all, if there be no honorable mode of escape from a duel with Rodney?’

‘Mr Earnshaw,’ he answered, ‘do you suppose that if there had been any, I, Fitz Daly, would be scouring Madrid in this rascally jingle, to the neglect of my natural rest, and his majesty’s regimental duty? There is no road but one, Sir, and that is straight before you. An officer of the ———th would die a thousand times over, rather than snail chickenly away under a disgraceful imputation. It’s as a friend I speak—let there be no misconception. Either you or I will read this youth a lesson in Chesterfield, that’s as sure as there’s brogues in Balruddery!’

There was no use in reasoning with a

mind like Daly's. He looked exclusively to the 'received thing,' and the 'credit of the corps.' Determined to maintain these at every risk to himself, it could not be expected that he should deal out a different measure to others. I took my resolution. Since I was perforce to proceed in the farce, I would at least guard against adding criminality to folly. I might walk through the part of a ceremonious homicide, but nothing should induce me to lift a weapon with a deadly purpose.

The *calesero* was ordered to remain in readiness near the place of meeting. This was the gardens of *Buen Retiro*, a fashionable walk, commanding the city; adorned with fountains, fruit-trees, shrubs, flowers, and lawns. The particular spot was close by the statue of Charles the fifth—a locality known to all but the most absolute strangers. When within sight of it, we observed Peel and Rodney pacing the sward, arm in arm.

'Now,' said the captain, 'I shall ascertain their *ultimatum*. If we go to the ground, remember that your pistols are hair-triggers—a look will discharge them. I would have told you this on the road, but you'll hold the secret the faster for getting it on the nick.'

He saluted Peel, and parleyed aside with

him for a few minutes. Rodney, wrapt in a camlet cloak, was gazing in the direction of the *Prado*. Had his features been animated by one vagrant gleam of the expression that won my early confidence, I would have overstepped the gladiatorial routine, and entreated him to unsay his inconsiderate speech. But his brow had lost its attractive flexibility; his lip, that used to curve so persuasively, displayed an outline cold and brassy as if it emulated the imperial severity of the neighboring figure in bronze.

Daly rejoined me. 'No concessions,' said he, 'proud as Lucifer, and hard as flint. Choice of ground is ours—I won the toss—you fire together—when you are ready a falling handkerchief will be the signal—think of nothing else.'

Twelve paces were measured. We assumed position. I glanced at Rodney as he advanced. His eyes were blood-shot: a hectic flush had banished the bloomy lustre of his cheek. His name trembled upon my tongue.

'Are you ready, gentlemen?' cried the seconds.

'Yes,' answered my opponent, raising his right arm.

'Yes,' echoed I, imitating the motion with the intention of firing in the air.

The handkerchief dropped. The pistols exploded simultaneously. I felt the shock of a ball at the wrist of the left arm. It is too much to say I *felt* it—the voice of Rodney pealing to my heart, monopolized sense and soul.

‘Robert!—you have shot me!’

It was true—irremediably true. By my hand he had fallen. An unwitting hand—for the trigger had deceived it. As he drooped on his second’s knee, I bathed his pale forehead with my tears, imploring forgiveness. It was a bootless suit. Flown was the spirit of the oracle, and silent its responses for ever!

CHAPTER XVIII.

Catholicism is the liberal patron of beneficent institutions. Penury and suffering eulogize the church as their protectress, and detect nothing pernicious in the magnitude of her emoluments. When their wants have been relieved at the door of the convent, they conclude that the means of alleviating distress cannot be too abundantly conferred upon a benevolent fraternity. They do not perceive that their birth-right has been bartered for the monastic pottage—that the soil has been alienated into corporative keeping, and their privilege of free-tenantry perverted into villainage. A class of the community deriving subsistence systematically from eleemosynary contributions, voluntary or legislative, must have previously relinquished the liberty natural to man. It must have surrendered the commonwealth, its advantages and immunities, in fee-simple, to a few proprietors, for permission to eat alms unmolested in the sun.

I was conveyed to the General Hospital

of Madrid, for the cure of my wound. It is an admirable establishment, open to every applicant. For six reals a-day, I had a separate room, good victuals, and unremitting attention. A brother of the Order of Charity nursed me with an assiduity and tenderness certainly more a-kin to our ideas of the inhabitants of a higher sphere than of this. The barber-surgery of Spain I knew, distrusted, and avoided. The injured arm was amputated by an English operator, a few inches below the elbow. He promised a daily visit, and to secure against contingency, instructed brother Pablo, my attendant, in the mode of dressing the wound. Strict injunctions were given, prohibiting whatever might agitate or disturb.

The ordinary precautions after amputation were insufficient in a case like mine. A consuming fire burning within, multiplied the chances of inflammation. The scene on the *buen Retiro*—its ceremonial mockery, and deadly consummation, flitted continually before me in horrid emblazonary. To reassemble the direful images by which reason and existence were assailed during my hospital confinement, would, notwithstanding the lapse of years, be a renewal of affliction. Whatever an avenging spirit could inflict upon itself, that I endure

ed. The last great act of ill was the colossus of a procession in which the accumulated transgressions of a whole life passed in black review.

After a second visit, I saw my professional countryman no more. Brother Pablo discharged his trust neatly, diligently, and well. He wilfully misunderstood my inquiries concerning the surgeon, and answered in terms as few and mysterious as the prophetic *dicta* of Delphi. Giving way to a gush of mental bitterness, I have marked, in the moment of returning calm, his fervent supplications for the hapless sinner. That intercession produced fruits, apart from providential interposition. It revived in the desponding soul the hope of comfort from above, and cherished the growth of charity towards the divided posterity of Adam. Though far and long asunder, kind-hearted friar, in my petitions to the seat of Mercy, thou still art unforgotten!

Brother Pablo's considerate silence respecting public affairs, was continued so long as other sources of information were inaccessible. When tidings were threatened by unwelcome channels, he discarded reserve. He then communicated the complete evacuation of Madrid by the allies; and the return of Joseph Bona-

parte with his army. 'The French will doubtless crowd all the hospitals,' said the friar, 'for they have many sick.'

The same day there came a din of bustle and confusion from the adjoining wards, which I interpreted as confirmation of the intelligence. At night, two French medical officers visited my room. They conversed in their native tongue, and, though confused by their rapid enunciation, I was able to follow the scope of their discourse:

'We have discovered the enemy!' said the elder officer, laughing, and showing my dress, 'here is an Englishman's uniform!'

'Poor fellow!' cried the other, 'he is an orphan of the war, and we must compassionate him!'

They interrogated my attendant in broken Spanish; then resumed their conversation in French. Sometimes they spoke so low as to be inaudible, but I gathered enough to understand that they were debating with regard to the introduction of additional patients into my apartment. There was convenient space for one, but he who was the senior in appearance, strongly recommended another. The younger finished the argument, by expressing his resolve to carry his point.

‘Guillaume Lamarque’s pallet,’ said he, ‘shall be placed beside this solitary Briton’s. They are of an age.’

Guillaume Lamarque was my junior by two or three years, and in the casualties of the field, exhibited a sad preponderance of misfortune. He was slowly recovering from the effects of amputation above the knee. The next morning, his medical friend, who was making a tour of duty, dressed Guillaume’s ailing limb with the manual dexterity characteristic of his country’s surgeons. He was about to proceed similarly with my arm, when I interrupted him by protesting against a change in the manner of treatment.

‘I don’t comprehend,’ said he, ‘explain.’ I told him that the mode of treatment among English surgeons was healing by the first intention. In amputating, they brought the skin completely over the surface, instead of stuffing the wound with lint; thus reducing it nearly to the state of a simple incision.

‘It’s quite incomprehensible,’ said he, tapping his snuff-box,—‘it’s quite incomprehensible how you should outstrip us in so clear a point of practice. But science, theory, and obstinacy, are branches of one tree, and that accounts for the tenacity with which our sages

hold by old forms. I recommended this very plan to my relative Larry and other chiefs of the department,—but it is still to be adopted.

Apropos—are you professional?

Stating my original destination, I gave a candid outline of my career, from the departure from England to the occurrence of the fatal duel. He retired, exclaiming that I was a romantic runaway, who should be sent back to his guardian. ‘Let your assistant dress the wound, as heretofore,’ he added, reverting his head.

Guillaume Lamarque informed me that our visiter, *Monsieur D*——, was a nephew of the illustrious Baron Larry, and almost his equal in surgical skill. The families of D—— and Lamarque belonged to the same *commune*.—To this he ascribed the particular attentions that had been shown to him. His history, of which he gave a modest relation, was one of the sorrowful tales of conscription, then too common to lead its narrator to conceive that he was entitled to any peculiar share of sympathy.

‘My father,’ said Guillaume, ‘was killed at Austerlitz—two of my uncles were blown up, by the premature explosion of a mine, at the siege of Saragoza,—another perished in a

sea-fight—the sole survivor is pastor of the village of Montcecile. Eusebe, my brother, went, as a Captain of *Chasseurs*, to Russia with the grand army. I was at school when he was enrolled. At eighteen, I married Justine Thomieres. Justine and I used to dance together: I thought her graceful. *Madame* Lamarque praised her good temper, and bade me make her my wife.—So I brought her home and we were happy with my mother and sisters until the conscription forced me to bid them all adieu!

‘I understood that married persons were exempt from service.’

‘Ah! the law was altered to suit the Emperor’s necessities, until at last nobody could be spared.’

‘Cruel, tyrannical law!’

‘We don’t complain of the law,’ said Guillaume, ‘but of its eternal exercise.—The richest and greatest in the nation come under its clutches as well as he who delves twelve hours for a *demi-franc*. No purseproud, overbearing *seigneur* can laugh at the hardships he shares himself; nor can he go to market for batons and orders as with you.—‘Promotion to the worthy’ is the motto of France.’

‘Your sufferings deserve reward.’

‘Yes; I shall dance no more with Justine.—I wish the shot had been less aspiring: it would not be half so awkward if I had the use of my knee.—Well, I shall obtain the pension, and cross, and be able to talk of campaigns, heroism, and so forth. They are fine affairs—but I am glad to take leave of them, although with the loss of a limb.’

The retreat of the allies into Portugal left the French in undisturbed possession of the Spanish capital. No people more readily blend the arts and amusements of peace with the prosecution of strife, or adapt themselves with greater pliability to the circumstances of their situation. The unconcealed aversion of the inhabitants did not abate their zest for the gaieties of the metropolis. Their lively philosophy consoled them under the worst of depressions—the consciousness of being many hundred miles from Paris.

Monsieur D—often cheered us by his unprofessional presence. He was learned and amiable. The simplicity of his unsophisticated patient delighted him. He loved to hear his rural anecdotes and joyous anticipations of home. All his eloquence, playfully employed, failed to excite in Guillaume a spirit of ambition. He neither cared for becoming *le General*

nor *le Prefet*. His wishes were centred in his provincial dwelling, with his mother, his sisters, and his dear Justine.

When my arm was healed, I took the air regularly in the hospital court, in which were a portico and fountain. *Monsieur D*—— escorted me round his wards, and with an earnestness that evinced the excellence of his nature, endeavored to interest my mind in useful speculations to the exclusion of its griefs. The remedy answered for the time; but, when evening descended, and the dim lamp and the frugal embers in the *brasiero* shed their melancholy light on walls erected as the refuge of infirmity, then was I again like a wizard in his circle, begirt by the demons of the past, from whose dark companionship there was no deliverance. I prayed—but Rodney's dying image rose between me and a throne of grace—and the frame of thought was broken. Sleep—such sleep as assists the action of the physical machinery—deserted my eyelids. The struggle against inward oppression waxed fainter and fainter. Pleading the change of season, I relinquished exercise. The sympathy of Pablo and young Lamarque lost its assuaging power. I longed to be alone—alone at midnight on some moon-lighted mountain—where, pouring

out my last breath in supplication to the Omnipotent, I might die, with silence for a monument.

Monsieur D—perceived that I was sinking under a malady of the heart. He came one day and hurried me through a long gallery into a private recess where his official books were stored. He inquired if I had strength sufficient for a journey across the mountains. I replied in the affirmative. He then explained his purpose.—Some members of the medical staff were going to Paris. I might accompany them to Bayonne. He would recommend me to the governor of that town—not as a prisoner—but as a friend;—with his aid the means of returning to England would be attainable.

It is needless to mention how gratefully I hailed the proposal. My benefactor provided every requisite. I was attired in the style of his assistant—my diminished finances recruited—and letters and instructions furnished to smooth every obstacle. His parting words were, ‘Speak of me to your father.’

Under the protection of humane and educated men, I reached Bayonne without injury or impediment. My recommendations were respected to the letter. I landed at Portsmouth within six weeks after the departure from Madrid.

CHAPTER XIX.

On a rainy night in January, as the town-clock struck eight, the coach, in which I was a passenger, drew up before the principal inn of E——. Ordering my luggage to the office of the establishment, I proceeded to the Travellers' Room. Enfeebled by cold and nervous irritation, I assumed a seat near the blazing fire and called for a pint of wine. A drinking party, and a prim, surtouted, mercantile looking person, occupied separate tables. The former were engaged in noisy argument—the latter seemed buried in accounts. The stranger's entrance occasioned no interruption.

'Another brace of port, waiter,' cried the principal speaker among the revellers, who were, what are rustically styled, 'topping farmers.'

'Not a drop more, Master Goodridge,' said a member of the circle—'not a drop more; between brandy and black-strap my poll's reeking like a lime-kiln—Mind ye, we've got a thumping score to pay.'

'A fig for the score!—your hay can afford a bout, and so can my wheat—Boney's a hearty paymaster!'

'Ay, that he is, by Jingo!' exclaimed the general group.

'Will he be so long, gentlemen?' asked the insulated individual, in the surtout, with an air of satisfied superiority.

'Why not?' demanded the master of the symposion.

'The latest advices from Gottenburg state, that the Emperor Napoleon had posted, *incog.*, through Wilna, on the 5th ult. leaving the wreck of the grand army to perish in the snows of Russia. This intelligence is confirmed by the agitation in the money market and the fluctuations in the Price Current. Alicante Barilla are quoted a shade lower.'

'Let them quote as they like,' observed Goodridge, sneeringly; 'the old cat will light on his legs—What d'ye think of Spain, sir?—Wellington has walked back to Portugal the way he came.'

'Talking of Spain, neighbor,' said a farmer, hitherto silent—'have you heard the news about Squire Rodney's heir?'

'Not I.'

'He's dead—his throat cut, at Madrid, by a

young chap, of these parts, that he fetched away as a servant.'

'Preserve us!—the 'Squire has one of the best properties in the county!—I hope the villain will get his reward.'

Leaving the wine untasted, I turned from the inn, in the direction of Thorncroft.—It was pitch dark. The wind blew piercingly—the rain fell thick and wetting. I was thoroughly drenched ere I arrived at the little gate, by which those who approached on foot shortened the way to the farm-house. At first it eluded my search. In the gloom of the elements, and the tumult of my feelings, I had passed it by. The hand grappled with it uncertainly. The latch had been displaced since I planted the laburnums, three years before, to grace the entrance.

Light beamed from the windows of home—heart-gladdening light!--Hope's messenger, that outwingeth the breeze, bearing from afar, on its seraphic pinions, smiling remembrances of affection and the fireside!--Cheerily rose the flame on the parlor hearth, as, mantled in shadow, I cleared a dripping pane to see if there were aught within that might allay the palpitation of the wanderer. The room was empty. Yes—my father would be superin-

tending the horses and cattle---his nightly custom. A piece of plain needle-work hung on the back of a chair. Thus my aunt ever disposed her relinquished sempstery. She would be required in the kitchen. The familiar furniture, in its respectable old age, retained possession, as of yore. There were some innovations: they were but few. A foolish drawing of mine had vanished from the wall. The clock with brazen dialplate, which in childhood I venerated as if it were an ancestor---had been removed from the corner where it clicked for half a century. In its stead, a mahogany beaufet displayed its glossy front. It ought not to have been there---it wanted harmony.

With benumbed fingers I tapped at the door. A step sounded nigh. Well, or ill, it would soon be over. The door was opened by a cherry-cheeked peasant girl, unknown, or it might have been, forgotten. There was something of alarm in her vague regard.

‘Is your master within?’

‘Noa---he be’ant.’

‘Is your mistress?’

‘Coom in---I’ll zee.’

I doffed my hat and cloak and transferred them to the girl, who looked as if I had fixed a spell upon her. Bidding her tell her mistress

that a long-absent friend was come, I stepped into the parlor.

A sedate matron shortly appeared and made a low obeisance. Supposing her to be a visitor, I asked if Mrs Rebecca were particularly engaged.

‘ Ah! I thought so, sir,’ said she, ‘ you’re a friend of the former tenants.’

‘ The former tenants!—isn’t this Thorncroft—Richard Earnshaw’s house?’

‘ O bless you, no, sir; it is Thorncroft, but it belongs to us now. Mrs Rebecca is over at Abel’s cottage, in lodgings. My husband bought the place, root and branch—lease, stock, furniture, and all, at the bankrupt’s sale.’

‘ The bankrupt’s!’

‘ You may well be surprised, sir, if you knew Mr Earnshaw in his better days. He was honest and industrious as mortal could be. Had saved a good penny, too—and, at fair or market, could hold up his head with the best. But he had his weakness—his son—’

‘ What of his son?’

‘ Why he must needs make the boy a gentleman, and send him to grand schools, and what not. He thought the sun and moon rose and set between the lad’s two eyes. This did very

well till he grew up; then young master must have his own way—must go with the great, jack-fellow like, and spend his guinea with an air;—what could be the upshot?’

‘Go on, ma’am—go on.’

‘Father and son disagreed in the long run. Robert got a purse of fifty guineas—enlisted in a marching regiment—and went abroad. They say he was preferred; and there’s a strange story about him and Mr Rodney’s heir, who was killed in foreign parts. That’s nothing to me. From the day that old Richard heard that his darling had gone a sogering, he never did any good. He neglected his business; and what with bad crops, and the murrain, and the failure of Medlicott’s bank, he was obliged to shut up shop. My husband says he might have kept on, for the property paid the debts and left something over. But his heart was in his son, and with him went prosperity.’

‘Where is he now?’

‘In heaven, I trust! he was buried a month ago. He died under Abel’s roof. He was welcome to stay here—but his spirit wouldn’t let him be under obligation to any one, gentle or simple.’

It was in Abel’s cottage that I had spent the three days when my extravagance in Glasgow

produced the quarrel with my father. A servant and lantern were offered to guide me thither. Darkness and loneliness better suited the temper of my soul, and I declined the civility. Plunging through rain-pools and lanes of mud I attained the lowly dwelling. Its owner answered my knock. Betraying no token of recognition, he informed me that Mrs Rebecca Earnshaw was in her own room. I announced myself as the bearer of tidings from her nephew, and was invited to her presence.

Ascending a narrow staircase, I found my venerable relative, though partaking of an altered lot, still preserving all the habits and many of the distinctive memorials of by-gone times. In person she was hale and erect. The lines of age were a little deepened, and the locks that escaped the decent cincture of her mourning cap, showed a more decided predominance of the silvery hue. The wakefulness of worldly care observable in her countenance, when, like Martha, she was 'cumbered about much serving,' had softened into the resigned expression of one who, chastened by crosses and trials and weary of temporal mutations, hath chosen 'that good part which shall not be taken away.'

She had been employed in the two-fold

occupation of knitting and reading. The volume—Willison's Balm of Gilead—elevated on a desk, procured in the days of domestic tuition, to save me from stooping in my studies—lay open before her. Among other relics, ranged upon a shelf, were the family Bible and the ancestral broadsword. When I crossed the threshold she passed the glasses of her spectacles through the folds of her apron—saluted me faintly and falteringly—then fixed upon me a look of anxious and piercing scrutiny.

The collar of the dripping outside garment concealed my features; I slipped off the incumbrance.

‘Aunt!—have you forgotten your prodigal?’

The voice thrilled through her frame as it had been the archangel's call to judgment—I was encircled by her parental embrace.—She sank into her chair. My hand was locked in her grasp, and, yielding to the pressure, I bent upon my knee. The light shone full on a face ravaged by war and wasting passions.

It was long ere she could summon power of utterance to the emotions that flooded her eyes and convulsed her lip. Her first words were—‘O me! O me!—Can this be my child!’ She

wrung her hands and relapsed into a paroxysm of weeping.

‘Spare yourself, dearest aunt !---if but for the sake of a wretched penitent, spare yourself !---‘ my punishment is greater than I can bear !’

‘ O, Robert ! Robert !---how is the gold become dim !---how is the most fine gold changed !---the crown is fallen from our head---wo unto us, that we have sinned !’

Though a woman of strong mind, it cost her a struggle before she overcame the impression created by the effects of wounds and affliction. The sight of the empty coat-sleeve, depending by my left side, opened the fountain of her grief afresh. It was her sole consolation that her brother had been removed ere he had drained the cup of sorrow to the dregs.

After the common impulses of nature had forced their way, religion and feminine tenderness dictated the propriety of restraining feelings that tended to crush mine. The waters of reproach retreated to their source. With a delicacy of attention of which it would have been difficult to conceive her capable, she proved herself a Christian mother; alleviating, by the gentlest sympathies, the mortal heaviness that lay like lead upon my heart.

My wet clothes filled her with apprehension; and she insisted on my retiring to bed. To none would she entrust the arrangement of the couch. The finest sheets were selected from her stores—for she had, in the changes of fortune, preserved the family linen—and were aired and spread by herself. Viands which her independent housewifery reserved for festive emergencies, tempted my sickly palate. Wine, the produce of grapes gathered from the vine that mantled the sunny south wall of Thorncroft, fermented and blended with the aroma of spices, offered its inspiring sweets to cheer the weary and heavy-laden spirit.

In compliance with my urgent desire, she remained by the bed-side until after midnight. I related what I had seen and suffered from the period of my flight. Shocked by exaggerated stories of Rodney's death, the statement of the facts relieved her, and elicited a prayer of thanksgiving. The kindness of the French medical officer drew forth her warmest benediction, and she expressed a fervent hope that the benevolent brother Pablo would be plucked like a brand from the burning.'

'And now, Robert,' said she, 'can you of a truth say, 'I have seen the error of my ways, and by my God assisting me, will do so no more?''

‘Not for worlds would I retrace my steps, or be again as I have been!’

‘Do you remember the words inscribed in the pocket-book I gave you when going to college?’

‘No, aunt—no—but I am sure they were good.’

‘Godliness, with contentment, is great gain.’ ‘These were the words—will you recollect them hereafter?’

‘As long as I live!—and by Divine aid, will act upon them. Instead of raising the arm of flesh, I shall henceforth endeavor to ‘fight the good fight.’

‘Yes, Robert—for ‘what doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul!’

‘Alas! if in this life only I had hope, I were of all men most miserable!’

The treasures of the East deposited at her feet would not have imparted a shadow of the delight communicated to the pious woman by the conviction that the frame of my mind had undergone a real renovation. Past trials she regarded as dust in the balance compared to the auspicious weight of spiritual improvement. She spoke of the future, and depicted it in pleasing colors. Her friends, she said, had not drop-

ped off in her distresses. Mr Thorpe had offered her an asylum. My old teacher, Mr Bartholomew, married and master of a thriving seminary in Wales, had sent her an earnest invitation to reside with him.

‘Let us go to Wales,’ I said; ‘Devonshire would kill me!’

‘Tomorrow, if you will,’ she rejoined—‘nor shall we be a burden to our well-wishers. I have saved more money than ever I shall want. If need had been, it would have gone to the general stock, and helped to meet your poor father’s debts; but they are paid, and over-paid. You can get what learning you require, and set up in business, like Jonathan Penrose.’

‘A surgeon with one arm, aunt!’

‘Let the head help the hand, child.’

‘Head, heart, and hand, shall be united in the sacred work of gratitude and atonement!’

‘My dear Robert, be grateful to your Maker.’

CHAPTER XX.

My aunt's active management admitted of no procrastination. When the weather promised a favorable interval, we commenced our journey. I bade farewell to the county of my forefathers. The sun-light of joy was eclipsed upon its fields---and I shrank from the pains of the troubled winter-watch which must have preceded its return.

An ancient town of the principality yielded us a meet habitation. We had reason to be thankful that our lot had fallen there. The comforts of animal existence were accessible to very limited finances. Luxury had not transported its pampered form beyond the mountains. An inhabitant of the capital would have pined for the assemblies of routine duplicity, miscalled society. To me the noiseless gliding of the diurnal current was rarest medicine.—Nor was I solitary. Disinterested love ministered to my outgoing and incoming. A placid sense of duty solaced my wanderings. Above me rocks arose in still sublimity---below rolled a lordly river, exulting in its countless vassals—a feudal

tower crested the pine-girdled height— while in all, and over all, was visible the wondrous agency of Him, whom to know is life eternal.

The instructor of my boyhood welcomed us to — in a different mode from that practised in artificial circles, where the professions of the lip make poor the acts of service. He was eminently useful in promoting my views. After revisiting a seat of medical learning, and making the acquisitions which I deemed necessary to my humble sphere, he recommended me to his acquaintances in the district. To secure the shelter of oblivion, I changed my paternal name for another connected with our house. Mr Bartholomew kept the secret even from his guileless spouse.

Though fated to be always an alien to the portal over which my deed had reared the funeral escutcheon, I thought it due to the family of St Aymers and to its unwilling injurer to relate, as I have herein related, the tale of my misfortune. An explanatory letter, dispatched by a safe but circuitous channel, recorded my unavailing sorrow and left no clue to a reply.

The slayer of her brother would have been worse than romantic to have persevered in

cherishing an attachment for Ellen Rodney. She was omitted in my inquiries—but she was remembered in my prayers. In a moment of search, the scrap of blue ribbon, my furtive keepsake, came to light. It was faded like myself. The charm that hallowed it is gone—yet it holds its place among the class of treasures which derive their value from memory's consecration. About two years after settling in Wales, accident afforded me a sight of my youthful love. From a cliff which crowned a picturesque cascade, I marked the ascent of a lady who leaned confidently upon a gentleman's arm. The lady was veiled; her companion was a stranger to me. From their manner I conjectured them to be husband and wife. A gust of wind drifted the veil aside and showed the mild beauty of Miss Rodney. I turned away my step and wished that happiness might ever be her portion.

Faithful in affection—ripe in years and in the virtues which render age an easy and honorable burthen—Rebecca Earnshaw resigned her soul to her Creator. Her nephew received the rich legacy of her blessing, accompanied by a single condition. It was her dying request to rest beside her brother in the grave. She sleeps upon his left, in the burial-ground of the

chapel where the praises of God continue to be celebrated with the simplicity she loved.

My self-imposed task is brought to a close. Should the purpose for which it was undertaken be attained, then I shall be amply recompensed for copying a blotted register. If I have freely interpreted conventional terms—if I have said that the laurels of war tarnish the brow they encircle—my heart justifies my motives and History embodies my defence.

Though subdued by time and by a higher influence than belongs to aught so transitory, I cannot revolve the untoward circumstances which governed my destiny without the most poignant regret. Could I have discerned the depth of a father's unrevealed fondness—or could he have perceived how intensely I thirsted for the evidence of its power—how much of bitterness had been spared us both!

I have passed the meridian of my days.—Among these hills I have, for sixteen years, labored to lessen the sufferings of my fellow-creatures. In the journal of my gains the poor man's mite was never numbered—yet Penury cannot charge me with backwardness to its call. I have had my reward in the growing reconciliation of the spirit to itself.

But moods intervene when the consciousness of the zealous performance of duty, and the blessed assurances of faith are darkened—awfully darkened—by clouds of remorse.—Grievous is the guilt of filial ingratitude and the shedding of blood.

How happy are they who can find in reflection,
No act that cries ‘Shame’—no abhorr’d recollection;
Whose thoughts shed the light of tranquillity round
 them,
To cheer and support when the world hath bound them
 In cankering chains.

But wretched is he whose career is in blindness,
Who joins hands with hatred and battles with kindness;
Who, keenly alive to a fine sense of pleasure,
Abandons the cup of delight for a measure
 Of poison most foul.

And such have I been, but too long, to my sorrow,
I’ve done that today which I’ve wept for tomorrow—
Still loving the right, and the wrong still pursuing—
Making vows to be wise, and yet madly renewing
 Old follies again.

I have dreams—I have dreams—by these dull mid-
 night embers,
Of things which my soul with reluctance remembers—

Of dear household scenes, where, at morn, drooping
 hearted,
With eyes raining tears, in my boyhood I parted
 From one, now no more.

All empty his seat—it were vain to deplore him—
Yet I wish the deaf grave for an hour would restore
 him;
Until, from the erring lips prized far too dearly,
He heard his son's grief that he ever severely
 A fond bosom pained.

The wish is opposed by the justice of Heaven,
'Tis right man should suffer before he's forgiven;
And O, never dagger cut keener or deeper,
Than useless regret o'er the poor silent sleeper
 We've injured and loved.

I see through the lattice the stars dimly gleaming,
Blest beacons of hope o'er a troubled sea beaming;
I turn from their light to the Being who made them,
And pray that the beauty in which he arrayed them
 May one day be mine.

Thou know'st, O Unknown, whom to name can we
 never—
Who art that thou art—hast been still---shalt be
 ever,---
Thou know'st that thy creature, now humbled before
 thee,

With his weak human sense doth sincerely adore thee---
Then hear him---O hear.

O hear him---this hour---while the hues of his spirit
Are undimmed by the stain all are born to inherit;
And grant that, unmoved by life's joy or life's sorrow,
Man's smile or man's frown, he may act on the morrow
The thoughts of tonight.

I ask not for riches---for power I care not---
To win them, as most mortals win them, I dare not;
And the fame which I covet, I'll never here know it---
I may not deserve it---ye cannot bestow it---
Blind brothers of clay.

But guide me, O God, in a course still improving---
As this orb round the sun, in thy light always moving;
And let nought unholy arise to conceal thee
From him, who, whenever he ceaseth to feel thee,
Contentment hath none.

May my life-time glide on, as these night-sands are
going,
To eternity's ocean, a quiet stream flowing;
O my soul, be thy waters still pure as they now are---
Still blessed---lest they wander---O Lord, with thy
power
To turn them to thee.

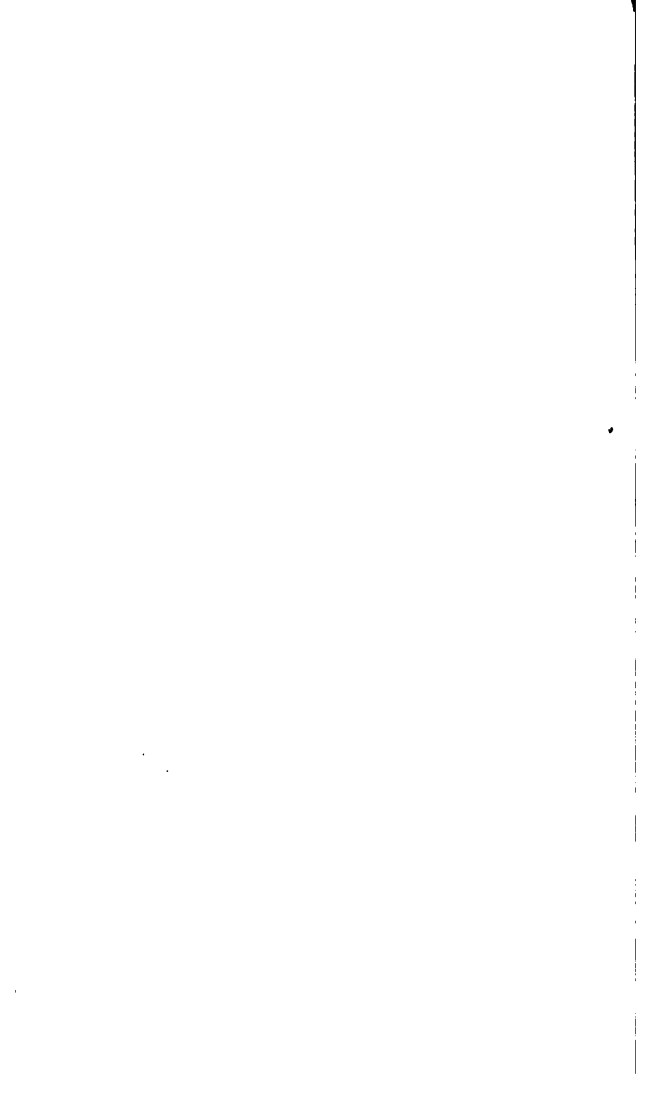
Then I'll grasp thy cold hand, mystic Death, as the
hoary
High-priest of a temple with clouds on its glory;
And though in the portal the pilgrim may falter--
He'll forward with joy when he thinks of the altar
Bright burning within.

gs.









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